



Carry your loved one's ashes around your neck

CINCINNATI (AP) — Forget about the usual pomp and circumstance of a funeral. A woman in Cincinnati is carrying a small urn around her neck as a memorial to her husband who died in a plane crash.

Divorce can be predicted — even before the knot is tied

Researchers have found that couples who get married in the winter are more likely to divorce than those who get married in the summer.

London's millennium party approval

London's millennium party approval

London's millennium party approval

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German envoy meets Hizbollah chief

BEIRUT (AFP) — German Intelligence coordinator Bernd Schmidbauer, who negotiated an exchange of prisoners and bodies between Israel and Hizbollah, held new talks Friday with Lebanese and Hizbollah officials. Mr. Schmidbauer met Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, the secretary general of the Hizbollah, in the presence of the director-general of Lebanese general security, Raymond Rouphael. Lebanese interior minister Michel Murr said. Mr. Murr told a press conference that he also held talks with Schmidbauer, who was in Lebanon on a 48-hour visit. He added that the German envoy handed over letters written by Sheikh Abdel Karim Obeid and Mustapha Dirani. Lebanese Muslim fundamentalist leaders held by Israel, to their families. Mr. Obeid was kidnapped by Israeli commandos in South Lebanon in 1989, while Church Dirani was picked up in the Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon in 1994.

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Man killed in tanker collision

AMMAN (J.T.) — A man was killed Friday in a blaze that engulfed five tankers in a collision on Azraq road, the Civil Defence Department said. The man was identified as Ali Abdullah Suleiman Makhadmeh.CDD said the man was rushed to Prince Faisal Hospital in Yajouz. No further details were immediately available.

Development panel holds meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Friday chaired a meeting for the ministerial development committee during which the committee discussed and approved several economic and development issues.

Peay arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — The head of the U.S. Central Command, Lieutenant General Binford Peay, arrived here Friday for a several day official visit. He was received at the Amman Airport by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Miral.

Senior Omani police official begins visit

AMMAN (Petra) — The assistant director-general of the Omani customs and police directorate, General Mohammad Ben Abdullah, arrived in Amman on Friday on a one-week visit to Jordan during which he will meet with Public Security General Nasouh Muhieddin to discuss cooperation between the police forces of the two countries.

Iran invites ministers from 10 countries for conference

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has invited foreign ministers from more than 10 countries to a regional summit to discuss the situation in Afghanistan following the Taliban militia's seizure of power, officials said Friday. "This conference will centre on ways to find a solution to the crisis in Afghanistan," Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mobarhamdi said, adding that the summit was due to be held on Oct. 29 and 30.

France writes off half Syrian debt

PARIS (AFP) — France has written off nearly half of Syria's 1.8 billion Franc (\$360 million) debt with Paris during a visit to Damascus by President Jacques Chirac, the Arabic-language daily Al-Hayat reported Friday. "Syria's debt to France has been cut by nearly one billion francs, representing the arrears due from Syria which interrupted its repayments in 1987," it said, quoting informed sources. The decision was "an important political gesture by Mr. Chirac towards Syria," said the London-based newspaper.

Falashas demand relatives be allowed to come to Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — More than 1,000 Ethiopian Jews (Falashas) demonstrated outside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office Friday, demanding that the government move faster to bring their relatives from Ethiopia to Israel. "We miss our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers," chanted the protesters.

King: Peace process does not have luxury of time

Success of peace process needs help, cooperation of all interested parties

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Friday called for intense efforts to reach a comprehensive, just and durable peace in the Middle East region and warned against the rising tide of extremism in the region.

In an interview with Channel Three of French television, the King said: "As we told French President Jacques Chirac, the dangers of war still exist until peace prevails and I think that we stand at the edge of the precipice at this stage."

"Everything has to be done to ensure what has been achieved so far is not destroyed in the times ahead, and that we should continue to build the comprehensive peace that we seek," said the King.

Asked whether he thought the headline policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu were behind the escalation of tension in the region, the

King said: "I don't wish to specify where the fault lies. I think it is a series of very tragic events and an agenda as a result that have been imposed upon the region by extremists, such as the Hebron massacre (of last year). It was followed by many acts of terrorism inside the area of Palestine and Israel, and the loss of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the architect and the soldier of peace on the Israeli side. So instead of the atmosphere that had started with promises and the conviction of all that the overwhelming majority will then achieve their objectives of peace, suspicions began to grow, and the whole atmosphere has changed..."

I hope that what Prime Minister Netanyahu has promised will be delivered. He spoke of a desire and a commitment to surprise me. I think he has spoken to the president on the

same. I hope he will contribute to peace in the times ahead. Asked why he thought the United States does not want to see the French and Europeans co-sponsoring the peace process, the King said:

"I don't think that from what I have heard and seen that this is necessarily accurate. I believe that the same implies to (France and Europe) in the sense that neither France, with its very important position in Europe, nor Europe wants to be in competition with the United States. But what we must all hope for is collaboration and cooperation to help the peace process and to help all those concerned in the region to move ahead, and I think this is not resented by any. "I think what has been missing so far is to lead good offices. Much has been provided by our

(Continued on page 7)

Islam's success lies in its ability to accommodate diversity — Crown Prince

AMMAN (J.T.) — In an interview with the Church Times, the official publication of the Church of England, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan traced his own interest in the evolution of inter-faith dialogue and his commitment to the necessity of finding a law of peace, since the early seventies.

Prince Hassan admitted that "during the seventies and eighties, the question of inter-faith dialogue had been an ivory tower affair," but expressed hope that "the nineties will be the decade in which the international humanitarian order, not to be confused with humanism as a principle, will be the lobby of the powerless."

As a member of the International Parliamentary

Association Against anti-Semitism, the Crown Prince emphasised the need to incorporate the fear of Islam into the workings of its committees, because after all, "there seems to be a readiness in Western minds to link violence to Islam and not take into consideration the voice of one billion Muslims who are the silent majority that cannot make their message heard. Still, seventy per cent of the whole world refugees are Muslims."

Also, as part of Jordan's outreach to the world, the Crown Prince delivered two lectures on the theme of Pluralism in Islam at the London Inter-Faith Foundation and London Leo Baeck-Colege.

In his first address, the Crown Prince defined the

nature of pluralism and acceptance of diversity, and their linkage as important prerequisites for democracy.

In the context of Islam, he said "Islam is a harder term to define. I take it to denote a religion — a system of belief, worship, doctrine, ideals and ideas — that belongs to the family of monotheistic, scriptural religions which includes Judaism and Christianity.

"It has a wider meaning, however, embracing the culture and civilisation whose system of values has governed the lives of many different societies which have not been exclusively Muslim."

In Islamic civilisation, religion has served as a

(Continued on page 7)

Final Hebron deal remains elusive; talks will continue

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — All-night talks between Israel and the Palestinians broke up Friday morning with no agreement on an Israeli troop withdrawal in Hebron, but participants said the negotiations would continue.

"We have some difficulties and some major issues which were not solved, and there is no other way except to continue the talks," said Palestinian negotiator Yasser Abed Rabbo.

American mediator Dennis Ross said: "We're still working hard."

The Israeli assessment was somewhat more upbeat. Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy, who has been optimistic since negotiations started, said that it became apparent in the latest round that Palestinian negotiators now had a mandate from Yasser Arafat to

Arafat sends message to King Hussein

PRIME MINISTER Abdul Karim Kabariti on Thursday received Nabil Shaath, a special envoy of President Yasser Arafat, who conveyed a message to His Majesty King Hussein dealing with recent developments in the Palestinian-Israeli talks. President Arafat voiced his gratitude and appreciation for the King's efforts to support Palestinians.

conclude an agreement quickly.

"Now that there is willingness on both sides we are very close to a signed agreement," Mr. Levy told army radio.

The disagreements are over a list of Israeli demands aimed at improving security for the 450 Jewish settlers who live in Hebron among 94,000 Palestinians.

Palestinian negotiators have said they were willing to consider minor changes, but that the two sides must stick to the terms of the Hebron redeployment agreed to by Israel's previous government last year.

Israel now wants to increase the number of joint security patrols, prevent the reopening of a wholesale vegetable market near Jewish settler enclaves and retain the right to pursue suspects into neighbourhoods under Palestinian control.

Israel also demands that a cement wall be built to separate settler areas from

(Continued on page 7)

Chirac visit to Jordan hailed as highly successful on peace front, bilateral ties

By Sa'eda Kifani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — French President Jacques Chirac concluded a two-day visit Thursday that was hailed by both French and Jordanian leaders as extremely successful.

The King, in a joint press conference with President Chirac held at the Royal Coun, said: "I believe I echo the feelings of all Jordanians when I say that we are extremely happy to have (President Chirac) come and visit us, short as a visit may be, (it was) important that he chose to come to this region at a critical time."

France and Jordan are proud of their bilateral relations "that develop and grow every passing day," King Hussein said at the press conference. "I believe we are before limitless horizons for greater cooperation in the times ahead."

President Chirac, on his way back home today after a whirlwind tour in the region, hailed Jordan's democracy and the King's efforts towards achieving peace and security.

Addressing the Jordanian Parliament, the French president said: "It is of great pleasure to me to be amongst you. I would like to address to you the message of peace and friendship. Your Majesty, you have put the country on the path of democracy and today the Jordanian Parliament is a reflection of the diversity of the components of the society."

During the presidential visit, the first since President Chirac took office in May last year, several agreements between the two countries in the cultural, military and economy domains were struck. A



French President Jacques Chirac and His Majesty King Hussein at a guard of honour mounted upon the departure of the French president from Jordan on Thursday (photo by Youssef Altan)

financial protocol worth of 80 million francs (\$16 million) was signed and a decision by King Hussein to deal with the French language on equal footing as English in all Jordanian schools and universities was announced upon the president's arrival.

Jordan, in the eyes of President Chirac, is a key country in the region. "It is a country of peace and stability. It is a country of prosperous democracy and whose economy is growing upwardly," he said. "And relations between the two countries cannot but develop more."

An associate accord between Jordan and the European Union will be signed in the coming few weeks. The accord allows Jordan's economy to grow faster, Mr. Chirac said. It eliminates barriers in exchanging goods with the

union. "I'm delighted to see that this accord will become effective soon. It will be a landmark and an advantage to the Jordanian economy," Mr. Chirac said. "Our cooperation, that is not only limited to economy, is the result of the oneness of our vision."

"We have worked closely together in peacekeeping in the world together," said the King in reference to U.N. peacekeeping forces in Sarajevo and other parts of the world that include Jordanian and French forces.

Even the normally Westway Islamists described as highly positive Mr. Chirac's visit, which included the impressive address to Parliament where he addressed Arab rights and the plight of the

(Continued on page 7)

Chirac leaves Egypt for France

CAIRO (AFP) — French President Jacques Chirac Friday left Egypt for France at the end of a week-long tour of the Middle East in which he stressed his desire to see France and Europe play a political role in the region.

Mr. Chirac, in a news conference with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo Friday, supported the Italian concept of naming a European special envoy to the Middle East but agreed that the U.S. role was key. Mr. Chirac began his region journey Saturday in Syria, then visited Israel, the autonomous Palestinian areas, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt.

He was speaking at a news conference with Mr. Mubarak in Cairo at the end of a seven-day Middle East tour during which he defended Arab rights. He then left for Paris.

Netanyahu approves oil drilling on Golan

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has given the go-ahead for drilling oil-wells on the Golan Heights seized from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war. Haaretz newspaper said Friday.

It said the prime minister gave his approval to the National Oil Company two months ago without consulting Israel's military chiefs.

The government's deputy legal adviser Menni Mazuz also approved the project on the grounds that the Golan was part of Israeli territory since its "annexation" in 1981. Haaretz said. The National Oil Company has invested \$1 million in preliminary surveys and hopes to extract a total of two million barrels of oil worth \$24 million.

But the work could be delayed because of a pending change in status of the company, which is to be privatised.

The National Oil Company's request to drill was rejected by the previous Israeli government out of concern that such a move would be perceived as provocative since Syria seeks the return of the Golan Heights in exchange for peace. Haaretz said.

(Continued on page 7)

U.S.-brokered ceasefire holds in Iraqi Kurdistan

ERBIL (Agencies) — A U.S.-brokered truce between warring Kurdish factions in northern Iraq was holding Friday, with just minor skirmishes reported in the region, a U.N. official said.

"There has been a little shelling this morning in the area between Degala and Koi Sanjak. It looks like the truce is holding," the official said in the main Iraqi Kurdistan city of Erbil.

The Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) led by Masud Barzani and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) of Jalal Talabani agreed a truce taking effect in northern Iraq as of midnight Wednesday.

The U.N. official added that many roads in the region were still closed, and that fighters from both sides were still deployed in heavy numbers on the ground.

"There were some clashes until about nine o'clock last night (1700 GMT) but the ceasefire is now fully in position," KDP commander Roj Nuri Shuwayis said in the frontline town of Degala.

There were no reports of fighting from the rest of the mountainous region. The KDP and the PUK had exchanged fire near Degala on Thursday despite the ceasefire being called for the night before.

Delegations from the two sides are to meet in Turkey

next week for peace talks chaired by senior U.S. diplomat Robert Pelletreau, the State Department said on Thursday.

"Both will be represented at the table with him and with representatives of the governments of Turkey and the United Kingdom," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said in Washington.

Britain and Turkey have helped bring the two factions together.

"This ceasefire is going on without any conditions. The conditions will be considered in the negotiations," Mr. Shuwayis said.

The PUK said it was committed to the truce brokered by Mr. Pelletreau this week.

The PUK leadership is emphatic about its commitments to maintaining the ceasefire to give peace talks scheduled to begin next week every chance of success," it said in a statement.

Fighters on either side of the frontline pitched tents on Friday to shelter from the rain. The guerrillas, known as "peshmergas" (those who face death), normally sleep in the open air covered only by a blanket.

"We can relax for at least a week now," one KDP guerrilla said. Others gathered in small groups, chatting and smoking cigarettes.

In other areas, ragged children toting wooden guns played on the streets, stopping vehicles at "checkpoints" — imitating the Kurdish guerrillas whose real checkpoints were common during the recent spate of fighting.

The KDP, then backed by Iraqi armoured troops, took Erbil from the PUK at the end of August, prompting U.S. missile strikes on military targets in southern Iraq.

The fall of Erbil briefly brought President Saddam Hussein's forces back into a region barred to him for five years by a U.S.-led no-fly zone over northern Iraq, set up after the 1991 Gulf war.

More 2,000 pro-U.S. Iraqi Kurds fled northern Iraq in fear of Iraqi army, badly dantaging U.S. plans.

The status of Erbil, where the two groups had set up a joint parliament that collapsed in fighting in 1994, and the sharing of revenues from a makeshift oil trade across the Turkish border have been sticking points at previous U.S.-sponsored peace talks between the Kurds.

There were fewer KDP Peshmergas on the streets of Erbil on Friday, but many civilians were sceptical the new ceasefire would hold.

"There will be no stability until the central government

Hariri wins third term as Lebanon's prime minister

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri was nominated to a third term of office on Thursday after members of the country's new parliament called overwhelmingly for his reappointment.

Mr. Hariri, a construction tycoon who has held office for four years, said he would start consultations on forming a cabinet on Saturday and expected to complete the new government on Sunday.

A statement issued by President Elias Hrawi's office said Mr. Hrawi asked Mr. Hariri to form the new government after consulting parliamentary deputies, most of whom said they wanted Mr. Hariri to return to office.

Mr. Hariri and his outgoing government stepped down last week to allow the newly-elected parliament to choose a prime minister.

Some 101 of the 128 deputies, who were summoned on Wednesday and Thursday to the presidential palace to express their views to Mr. Hrawi, told reporters they chose Mr. Hariri.

Those who did not name Mr. Hariri for the post expressed no other choice for prime minister but told reporters they wanted policy changes.

Responding to concerns expressed by politicians, labour unionists, commentators and clerics about an economic slowdown and widespread poverty in the country, Mr. Hariri said the new government would have to resolve social problems.

"The economic situation is good but we have social problems and we have to take care of them," he told reporters at the presidential palace.

Estefan Al Douwahi, outgoing social affairs minister, said last week that one million people — 30 per cent of Lebanon's 3.1 million population — were living below the poverty line. Druze leader Walid Junblatt, another minister and hitherto a key Hariri ally, also criticised Mr. Hariri's multi-billion dollar reconstruction policies, saying they had impoverished 40 per cent of the Lebanese people.

Hitting back in remarks after his reappointment, Mr. Hariri said it was wrong to say Lebanon faced economic disaster.

"Some people are speaking about the government as a government of economic salvation, as if there is an economic disaster," he said. "This is not right. The economic situation is good."

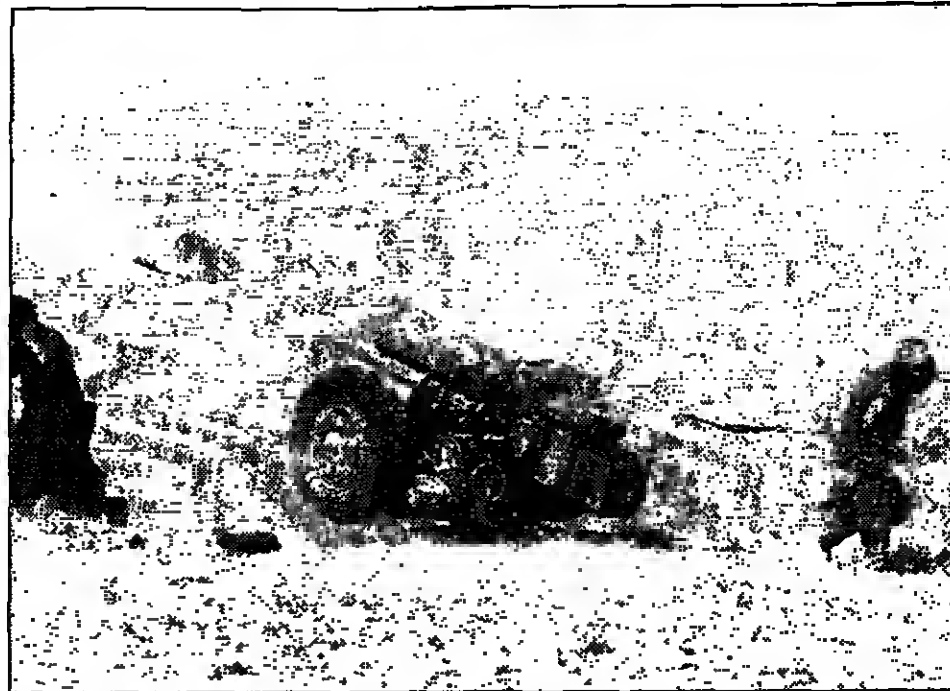
Mr. Hariri was nominated just in time to receive French President Jacques Chirac who arrived in Beirut during the evening on the fifth leg of his Middle East tour.

The 51-year-old Hariri, who has led an ambitious drive for national reconstruction in his two previous terms of office, is widely considered indispensable if Lebanon's post-war revival is to continue.

Mr. Hariri, whose personal fortune is estimated at \$3 billion to \$4 billion, emerged from the parliamentary elections held in August and September as perhaps Lebanon's most powerful politician. He won a seat in parliament for the first time, sailing home at the head of a bloc of about 20 supporters which will make him one of the strongest figures in the house.

This is likely to give him greater influence than he held in the old parliament, of which he was not a member and in which he had few allies. The parliament shelved many of his costly projects for rebuilding the country.

Mr. Hariri's new parliamentary strength, and a new alliance with Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, with whom he frequently clashed in the old parliament, could facilitate passage of his projects.



Taliban fighters fire a Soviet-made cannon towards former government forces, 20 kilometres north of Kabul October 25. Warplanes flew repeated sorties over the battlefield and the Taliban movement signalled strongly that ceasefire talks were over (Reuters photo)

Bitter Afghan foes join hands to fight Taliban

JABAL OS-SIRAJ, Afghanistan (R) — Once bitter rivals, Ahmad Shah Masood, the former Afghan government's military chief, and northern Uzbek leader Abdul Rashid Dostum have finally allied to face the Taliban militia.

Mr. Masood wants to dislodge the Taliban from Kabul after the radical militia took control of the Afghan capital last month, making two-thirds of the country theirs.

To do the job, Mr. Masood needs General Dostum's army, the strongest force out of Afghanistan's tangle of armed factions. But Gen. Dostum has been reluctant to ally with his former foe and even now his backing for Mr. Masood's counter-offensive appears tentative.

In Jabal Os-Siraj, a town 45 kilometres north of the Afghan capital, where Mr. Masood is headquartered, hundreds of troops belonging to Gen. Dostum's Jumbish-e-Milli faction are billeted on the floors of dingy hotels and run-down restaurants.

While most Afghan fighters sport straggly beards, Gen. Dostum's Uzbek fighters are instantly recognisable by their thick mustaches, closely shaved chins and blue-checked turbans over neat, Soviet issue combat dress.

The Jumbish have a plentiful array of armour, artillery and a small air force and Gen. Dostum's forces played a major role in Tuesday's offensive against Taliban forces north of Kabul.

"For the first time, Gen. Dostum's troops were fully integrated alongside our troops," said Mehrabodin Massani, a spokesman for Mr. Masood.

But the wily Gen. Dostum, who jealously guards his hold over six northern provinces in Afghanistan, has appeared less than committed to his erstwhile foe, keeping quiet about his alliance with Mr. Masood.

He agreed a defensive alliance with Mr. Masood earlier this month after the Taliban advanced north towards his territory, but suddenly held peace talks with the Taliban only two days after recognising the ousted government's legitimacy.

In a tour of the front this week, Gen. Dostum's top commander, General Abdul Majid Ruzi, would only say of his men's obvious presence: "They (Jumbish troops) do not belong to us."

Gen. Dostum also made a last ditch attempt at forging a ceasefire on Sunday. The Taliban are now under no illusion they face the Jumbish in their battle to hold onto Kabul.

The Afghan Islamic Press quoted acting Taliban Information Minister Amir Khan Mutaqi saying that Gen. Dostum's forces "have openly taken part in the offensives" against the Taliban north of Kabul.

Heavy fighting continued for several hours north of the capital on Thursday, where a Masood offensive has failed to win control of a strategic pass, before a lull set in.

The decision to back Mr. Masood cannot have come easy to Gen. Dostum as the

two men fought hard for control of the strategic Salang highway in 1994.

Gen. Dostum was a commander in the Soviet-backed Afghan army while Mr. Masood shot to fame as probably the ablest Mujahedin commander in the Afghan resistance to the Soviet invasion.

But their fear of an Afghanistan under the complete control of the Taliban has proved stronger than their differences.

"The Pakistanis tried hard to drive a wedge between Gen. Dostum and Mr. Masood," said a Western aid worker who knows Mr. Masood well.

She said the Pakistani government, widely seen as the main backer of the Taliban movement, had tried to tempt Gen. Dostum with a share of potentially lucrative trade between Pakistan and the former Soviet republics of Central Asia to the north.

But Gen. Dostum cannot have failed to notice how the Taliban have quickly forgotten power-sharing arrangements with other warlords in their dramatic sweep northwards since the militia was founded in 1994.

"Gen. Dostum would be cutting his own throat if he threw in his lot with the Taliban," said a Western observer in Afghanistan.

The Taliban's radical brand of Islam is wholly unwelcome in the more liberal north and fear of the Taliban as a mainly ethnic Pashtun movement from the south worries Gen. Dostum's ethnic Uzbeks and Mr. Masood's ethnic Tajiks from the north.

Ben Laden said main suspect in Saudi blasts

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — U.S. officials on Thursday said a wealthy Saudi dissident was a prime suspect in two guerrilla bombings that have killed 24 Americans in the past year in an apparent effort to drive the United States from Saudi Arabia.

Counter-terrorism officials said they had received a report from a foreign intelligence service that the suspect, Osama Ben Laden, had taken credit for the bombings in telephone conversations and had vowed to strike again.

Although the officials were unable to confirm the bulk of the foreign-supplied intelligence, they said it was unusually detailed "and does fit well with what we know from other sources concerning Ben Laden and Sunni extremist networks."

"For example, we have a large body of reporting on Ben Laden's efforts to encourage cooperation between Islamic extremists of many nationalities and on his long-time relationship with Iraqi and Sudanese officials and have some reporting concerning his cells within Saudi Arabia," a counter-terrorism official said.

Mr. Ben Laden, who has recently spent time in Sudan, Yemen and Afghanistan, has denied involvement in the bombings that killed five Americans and two Indians in Riyadh on Nov. 13, 1995 and killed 19 U.S. Airmen in Dhahran last June 25.

But he called those events warnings that the United States should withdraw its forces from Saudi Arabia. America's largest oil supplier, Four Saudis executed for the Riyadh attack said they had been inspired by his writings.

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns declined comment on a report in Thursday's Washington Times, which detailed the telephone conversations in which Mr. Ben Laden, purportedly took credit for the blasts and promised to hit again.

Specifying that he was speaking about Mr. Ben Laden without reference to the ongoing joint U.S.-Saudi bombing probe, Mr. Burns said: "He's a bad guy ... engaged in activities that we believe are terrorist."

"We try to follow his career because we want people like him to meet justice. We want to bring them to justice when we can. So, we're interested in him and we'll continue to follow his career very closely."

In a fact sheet handed out in February, the State Department described Mr. Ben Laden, scion of a Saudi construction family who was stripped of his Saudi citizenship in 1994, as "one of the

most significant financial sponsors of Islamic extremist activities in the world today."

It linked Mr. Ben Laden, who has been under the protection of the fundamentalist Taliban militia in Afghanistan, to guerrilla training camps in Afghanistan and Sudan and said he backed a bid to bomb U.S. forces in Yemen in 1992.

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which is leading the U.S. side of the probe, and the Saudi embassy declined comment on whether Mr. Ben Laden was a suspect in the Dhahran bombing.

But Kenneth Katzman of the Congressional Research Service, who monitors the Gulf region and has just returned from visits to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, said Mr. Ben Laden was feared as "the major potential threat to U.S. forces in the Gulf."

"Based on my conversations with U.S. military and other officials in the region, it's clear that they are looking at him closely in connection with the two past bombings," he added in a telephone interview.

Another U.S. official who monitors the Middle East said Mr. Ben Laden had long been a prime suspect. He said Mr. Ben Laden, a Sunni Muslim, apparently had poor relations with Iran's Shiite leaders, accused by the United States of being the chief state sponsor of anti-Western terrorism.

But Mr. Katzman said he understood that Mr. Ben Laden had narrowed his differences with Iran. "Any consummation of a political marriage between Iran and Mr. Ben Laden could have devastating consequences for the U.S. military in the Gulf," he added.

Official, however, said U.S. intelligence had not concluded that Mr. Ben Laden was responsible for the bombings. "Although he had not been ruled out as a culprit either."

"The notion that U.S. intelligence has reached a conclusion on this is wrong. We're still looking at a range of possibilities in terms of possible culprits," the official said.

At the Pentagon, spokesman Kenneth Bacon said: "I don't want to make the connection between this incident and Osama Ben Laden. That is for the FBI to investigate and the FBI to discuss."

The FBI, declined comment.

Among the links cited by the times report were congratulations Mr. Ben Laden accepted from members of terrorist groups June 25, the day a truck bomb ripped through a U.S. military housing complex in Dhahran, killing 19 Americans.

Egyptian generals want to set up 'war' party

CAIRO (R) — A retired Egyptian army brigadier who believes that another war with Israel is inevitable has applied for permission to form and lead a political party.

The party would be called the October party, after the last war between Israel and the Arabs in October 1973, and its leader would be Brigadier-General Mohammad Muawwad Gadd Al Moula, who fought in that war.

"Israel is not prepared to give up its ambitions. This is clearly reflected in the declarations made by its leaders," the brigadier told the English-language newspaper Al Ahran weekly.

"We have no choice but to adopt a platform for rebuilding a strong Egypt and preparing a new generation capable of fighting any attackers... We have to prepare for a fresh confrontation with Israel," he added, in an interview published on Thursday.

The political parties committee has been publishing the list of 120 founding members in Egyptian newspapers this month, asking readers if they know of any objections to them.

This is part of the complicated procedure for legal recognition of prospective political parties, many of which fail to cross all the hurdles. Registration can take years.

Mr. Gadd Al Moula said the founding members included six retired army major-generals from the October war, two former police major-generals and seven university professors.

The last attempt to form a new political party was by junior members of the outlawed and influential Muslim Brotherhood, who tried to set up a centre party early this year. The state ignored the application and many

members are now in jail.

Rights group protest ban on weeklies

Local and international rights activists on Thursday condemned as unconstitutional the Egyptian government's decision to stop the distribution of two weekly newspapers and called for the ban to be lifted.

The Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) sent a letter to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, also faxed to an international news agency, protesting the ban on the mass-circulation Arabic weekly Al Doustour and asking him to intervene personally.

In another statement, the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) slammed the distribution ban, which also stopped the sale of the English-language weekly the Middle East Times.

"EOHR believes banning newspapers contradicts article 48 of the constitution, which says that... Censorship of newspapers is forbidden," the group said.

"We request that the government review this ban and end press censorship as a step towards achieving a true democracy and allowing for freedom of expression," it added.

An official at the censorship office told Reuters on Wednesday that under a 1936 law, Egypt has the right to control the distribution of publications licensed abroad. Al Doustour is licensed in Cyprus, the Middle East Times in Athens.

The editor-in-chief of Al Doustour, Ibrahim Issa, said his paper was banned because of its anti-Israeli stand, which included printing a picture depicting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as Adolf Hitler.

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PROGRAMME TWO

14:05 Adventures of Mickey and Donald
14:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
14:45 Just the Job
15:00 Doc. — La France Aux Mille Villages
15:30 Fete des Bebes
16:00 Spots — Gillette
16:30 Chris Cross
17:00 News Flash
17:01 Funnies
17:15 Drama — Blue Heelers
18:00 French Programme
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 Magazine — Ziva
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Something Wilder
20:00 Doc. — New Literacy
20:30 Prism
21:10 Lois and Clarke
22:00 News in English
22:30 Return to Lonesome Dove
23:30 Feature Film: "Creep Show"

PRAYER TIMES

04:25 Fajr
05:43 (Sunrise) Duha
11:20 Dhahr
14:28 Asr
16:57 Maghreb
18:14 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661656

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Terrasanta Church Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 652326
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armanian International Church Tel. 827126
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Adnan Zaghoul 898140
Dr. Mazen Nballi 830435
Dr. Fayed Dabbas 759155
Dr. Fakher Bihesi 663412
Firas pharmacy 661912
Fardous pharmacy 778336
Al Asama pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Ta'anneh 250080
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Hisham Sharabati 986632
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 621111
Fire Brigade 637777
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661786
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636351
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381932
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 642816
Aidleh Maternity, J. Amn 6424412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, Al Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 6672379
The Islamic, Abdali 66612637
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muasher 7771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 89161115
Army, Marka 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 60224050
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Jbn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikam Modern Hospital (09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights is obtained on telephone (08) 52700 or (08) 523250.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:20 Beirut (RJ)
09:30 New Delhi (RJ)
09:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
10:00 Colombo (RJ)
10:00 Aqaba (add) (RJ)
10:25 Larnaca (add) (RJ)
14:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
15:30 Vienna (add) (RJ)
15:45 Zagreb (RJ)
16:20 Cairo (RJ)
18:15 London, Berlin (RJ)
19:40 Vienna (RJ)
21:10 Munich (RJ)
04:30 Bangkok (RJ)
07:45 Aqaba (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

02:00 Rome (AZ)
12:40 Muscat, Doha (GF)
13:00 Riyadh (SV)
14:30 Vienna (OS)
18:35 Amsterdam (KL)
19:35 Cairo (MS)
19:50 Damascus, Paris (AF)
20:15 London (BA)
21:00 Sanaa (IY)
21:35 Larnaca (CY)
22:25 Beirut (ME)
22:55 London (KL)
02:00 Kuwait (KL)

05:30 Tel Aviv (LY)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights
08:50 Aqaba (QAA) — proceeds to Marka airport at 10:00 a.m. (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
05:35 Beirut (RJ)
07:00 Larnaca (add) (RJ)
07:00 Zagreb (add) (RJ)
07:00 Vienna (add) (RJ)
07:30 Aqaba (add) (RJ)
11:00 Vienna (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:30 Munich (RJ)
11:45 Amsterdam, Brussels (RJ)
12:00 Geneva, Paris (RJ)
12:10 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
12:15 Cairo (RJ)
13:05 London (RJ)
16:30 Madrid (RJ)
20:10 Larnaca (RJ)
20:20 Jeddah (RJ)
20:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:20 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
05:15 Aqaba (RJ)

Other Flights

03:00 Athens (OA)
03:00 Rome (AZ)
07:00 Beirut (ME)
13:30 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
14:30 Riyadh (SV)
15:00 Vienna (OS)
19:45 Kuwait (KL)
20:20 Cairo (MS)
22:30 Larnaca (CY)
22:55 Paris, Damascus (AF)
22:59 Sanaa (IY)
03:00 Amsterdam (KL)
03:00 Rome (AZ)
05:40 London (RJ)

06:25 Tel Aviv (LY)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

10:00 Aqaba (RW)

HJAZ RAILWAY

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/500
Banana 500/500
Banana (mukhammar) 420/420
Banana (imported) 850/650
Cabbage 120/60
Carrot 280/150
Cauliflower 260/180
Cucumber (large) 180/120
Cucumber (small) 330/170
Eggplant 210/120
Garlic 720/500
Grapes 450/420
Guava 550/300
Lemon 360/200
Marrow (large) 220/140
Marrow (small) 350/220
Mulukhiyah 220/110
Onion (green) 280/180
Onion (dry) 140/80
Okra 850/500
Olive 580/400
Pear 600/420
Pepper (hot) 360/200
Pepper (sweet) 300/180
Pomegranate 360/250
Potato 320/180
Spinach 280/180
String Bean 550/350
Tomato 240/160

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Queen awards 88 children prizes for creativity

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor awarded prizes to 88 children in the 1996 Children's Creative Production Competition at the Shoman Forum in Jabal Amman.

According to a Royal Court statement, the event was organised by the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in cooperation with the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The competition featured the work of 908 children in the fields of poetry, literature, drama, drawing, handicrafts and photography, the statement said.

Queen Noor annually

patronises the competition and praised the children's innovative creations while emphasising the importance of expanding private sector support and participation in national children's projects.

In his speech, Senator Abdul Majeed Shoman thanked the children's "families, parents and schools for their care" and stressed the need to protect and nurture children's freedom of expression.

The Creative Production Competition was established in 1989 by the NHF and the Shoman Foundation and subsequently joined by UNICEF in 1991. The competition aims to

develop children's patriotism and national belonging, refine their literary skills as well as reveal, encourage and promote their artistic talents and abilities, the statement said.

Queen Noor was received by members of the NHF Executive Committee, Mrs. In'am Mufti, NHF Executive Director Dr. Ibrahim Badran, Mr. and Mrs. Khalid Shoman, Mr. Abdul Hameed Shoman, the Shoman Foundation General Director Dr. As'ad Abdul Rahman, UNICEF's Area Representative Ms. Dorrit Alopaeus-Stahl and NHF Director of Theatre-in-Education Ms. Lina Tal-Batayneh.

Education conference opens today

Parents, community and media to be focus

AMMAN (Petra) — The seventh annual conference of the National Association for the Education of the Child (NAEC) opens today at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) in Amman under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor.

Association President Rinaid Khatib explained the theme of the three-day conference: "Parallel education for children in pre-school and kindergarten" as intended to familiarise the general public with the concept of scholastic education supported and emphasised at home, in community centres and clubs as well as through television and

radio.

Several participant reports will focus on children's literature and benefits thereof as well as the media's educational role.

Dr. Khatib said that participants will review several international experiments and will discuss possible aid to the association from non-governmental organisations.

She said that the Jordanian and foreign participants will be joined by several regional and international organisations and will visit the Kingdom's tourist and historical sites as an orientation to both Jordanian history and national and

Islamic work.

Dr. Khatib added that the conference, designed to increase guardian awareness and participation in childhood education, is to be addressed by Minister of Education Munther Masri and Minister of Social Development Hamad Abu Jamous.

Auxiliary to the conference is a children's art exhibition.

Established on the directives of His Majesty King Hussein, the National Association for the Education of the Child was developed under the Queen's supervision.

RSCN directs environmental message towards youth, 'eco-clubs'

By Tanya Hahjouda
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) is currently directing efforts towards environmental protection education for youth.

"The RSCN now boasts 500 'eco-clubs' with over 20,000 students from private and public schools as well as from orphanages," according to RSCN Public Awareness Director Ahmad Rousan.

Last year, the RSCN trained 500 eco-club leaders, and continues training new leaders through workshops held twice weekly, he said.

The eco-club leaders give student lectures, help produce environmental magazines and clean-up campaigns and guide field trips and nature expeditions.

"The RSCN is hoping to create an [environmentally aware] generation through these programmes," Mr. Rousan confirmed.

He maintains there are other projects pending, such as a recent proposal from the

Queen Noor Foundation for combined efforts in educating inhabitants from rural areas on the importance of clean water wells for safety and waste management.

Meanwhile, the release date of the Nubian ibex from the Wadi Mujib reserve is slated for the beginning of 1997.

"The older ibex will stay in the reserve's enclosure, as it is now instinctively their home and the released ibex will be monitored daily," said RSCN volunteer Jelle Boef.

Prior to any release, the animals are checked for disease and so far all checked are in excellent condition, he said.

"Such a release is unprecedented in the Middle East," said Khaled Irani, acting general manager to the RSCN.

On Nov. 2 a special workshop for the young leaders will be attended by the Minister of the Environment Abdul Razzaq Tubeisbat, and RSCN President Anis Mouashar, both having recently returned from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Conference in Montreal. The workshop will be held in Irbid.

Officials review plans for Jordan season in Paris

AMMAN (Petra) — Plans for a "Jordanian season" in Paris next year were reviewed Friday by visiting head of the French Institute of Archaeology Camille Cabana and Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Saleh Irsheidat.

Mr. Cabana affirmed that the French government is eager to aid Jordan in various fields with an emphasis on tourism.

He explained that French institutions taking part in the coming event will prepare informational leaflets in French and Italian about this "cultural season" and that subsequent to the Parisian event Rome will host a similar display to promote Jordanian tourism.

Mr. Cabana said he was sure that the event would contribute towards further

Franco-Jordanian cooperation in the tourism industry while increasing the number of European tourists to the Kingdom.

Dr. Irsheidat stated that Jordan highly values its French ties and is grateful to the archaeological institute for its excavations in Jordan as well as its frequent aid in restoring precious artefacts found in various areas of the Kingdom.

He said that the Parisian event will help focus world attention on Jordan's archaeological and tourist attractions and that his ministry will display posters, leaflets, and photographs highlighting these as well as the country's historical sites.

Meanwhile, a French delegation arrived in Amman Friday to sign a partnership agreement designed to pro-

vide economic assistance to the Kingdom.

Director of the Jordan Loan Guarantee Company (JLGC) Dr. Jamal Salah said in a statement that the agreement marks one of the fruits of French President Jacques Chirac's visit to Jordan.

Central Bank Governor Ziad Fariz is slated to sign the agreement Sunday with the head of the visiting delegation Francois David who is chairman of the board of the French Company for Insurance of Foreign Trade.

He said the agreement will enable Jordanian exporters to benefit from the French company's enterprise through a special arrangement with the JLGC and added that the French company will supply information about marketing Jordanian goods in European countries.

Chirac stand on Middle East in harmony with EU line — visiting Austrian deputy

By Christina Schlegl
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The visiting President of the Austrian National Assembly, Heinz Fischer, confirmed that France's policy towards the Middle East conforms with the European Union's (EU) general stand on the region's most pressing issues.

"I am not an interpreter of the EU's political decisions," Dr. Fischer said in an interview with the Jordan Times Thursday, "but the French policy goes in the right direction."

Dr. Fischer was referring to statements made by French President Jacques Chirac during his visit to Jordan last Wednesday and Thursday, in which he expressed strong support for the Arab countries' rights to sovereignty and a peace process based on land for peace.

Still Dr. Fischer acknowledged that it is still too early to measure the "new French-Arab policy, which calls for an effective role for France and Europe in the Middle East peace process."

Dr. Fischer, who is heading a parliamentary delegation on a limited tour of the region, added that as a representative of Austria, he did not want to speak on behalf of the remaining 13 independent countries belonging to the EU.

Dr. Fischer sees the EU's future role as an "arbiter of the peace process."

The EU, he said, "plays an important role in international politics. It should take a stronger position in the future. It will be the community's task to show Israel in a diplomatic and understandable way, that it is also in the interest of the Jewish state to make a fair and comprehensive

peace."

This, he added, has always been Austria's policy to ensure the accomplishment of the peace process.

The EU states, he said, maintain many bilateral relations and good influential potential and should use this impact in favour of the Middle East peace process, even if Israel would voice its doubts against such a step.

"I am deeply convinced that the aim of accomplishing a fair peace does not mean, we are favouring the Arab countries, but it is in Israel's interest as well," he said.

Many problems would be solved much easier and positive results attained with such an attitude, he stressed.

Dr. Fischer also voiced Austria's concern about the current status of the peace process.

Even under [the late Israeli Prime Minister] [Yitzhak] Rabin's premiership there were difficulties in implementing a comprehensive peace," he explained, "but now under the leadership of the new right-wing government of Benjamin Netanyahu, it is even more difficult, and the future looks less bright for the time being."

Netanyahu, he said, has taken positions from which he cannot easily withdraw.

The Israeli Prime Minister, Dr. Fischer added, took decisions which caused additional (unnecessary) problems, like the opening of the tunnel outside the "Haram" of Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

It would be definitely a setback for the whole process if [Palestinian President Yasser] Arafat would be a victim of extremism arising in the region because of dissatisfaction



Lower House of Parliament Speaker Sa'ad Hayel Srour and visiting Austrian National Assembly Member Heinz Fischer Friday speak to reporters prior to Dr. Fischer's departure from Amman (Petra photo)

with the ongoing peace process, Dr. Fischer stressed.

But Dr. Fischer emphasised that the EU will not give up hope on the accomplishment of peace.

"There are three reasons why the continuation of the peace process between Palestine and Israel as well as Syria and Israel is unstoppable," he stated.

"First of all, there is no alternative [to peace], no matter who is ruling the country [Israel]. Secondly, after the presidential elections, the U.S. will return to 'mingle' within the peace process in a more constructive manner than for the time being. The same applies to the EU," he concluded.

"And finally," he said, "history has proven that governments and persons, in the end, had to do what is historically required."

Dr. Fischer, who arrived

bere last Wednesday from Syria, said that regarding the tense relations between Syria and Israel, the EU member countries are of the opinion that the "land-for-peace" agreement stipulated in the Oslo accord in 1993 must be fully implemented.

"It is a good concept," he said, "which both parties have to obey."

Regarding the ongoing seizure of South Lebanon by Israeli troops, he stated, that a solution for an independent and democratic Lebanon must be found.

The re-organisation of the Middle East peace process elements was one of the main topics discussed during Dr. Fischer's meeting with His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and the speakers of the parliament Thursday.

During his visit to the House of Representatives

and the Senate, Dr. Fischer met members of the Parliament.

Topics such as the Middle East peace process and the experiences of the European Union concerning parliamentary life were discussed.

Dr. Fischer invited House Speaker Sa'ad Hayel Srour to visit Vienna next year.

The two parliamentarians also talked about the feasibility of a project inviting Jordanian deputies to Austria to familiarise themselves with Austria's parliamentary life.

Dr. Fischer praised the excellent mutual ties between Jordan and Austria, but acknowledged at the same time that bilateral visits on the highest political and legislative levels are still too few and should be increased in the future.

The Austrian parliamentary delegation ended its three-day visit Friday.

JVA announces final plans for new dams

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Friday announced the completion of final designs and tender documents for the construction of several dams in the Jordan Valley region.

A JVA official said that Al Wahdeh dam near the Syrian border which, according to 1988 estimates, has a projected total cost of JD213 million will take four years to build.

The dam is to be constructed on the Yarmouk River and will have a wall measuring 100 metres in height.

It is projected to be able to store up to 225 million cubic metres (mcm) of water to be used for irrigation in Jordan Valley farmlands as well as for domestic use in the Amman and Zarqa governorates, according to the official.

The dam, whose wall could later be raised to 140 metres, will be the largest in the Kingdom. The largest dam at present is the King Talal Dam with a storage capacity of 100 mcm.

The government is currently seeking funds to commence construction on an additional dam in the Wadi Hassa in southern Jordan.

The Tannour dam has a projected height of 69 metres and a storage capac-

ity of 16.8 mcm, according to the official who said that the dam is slated to irrigate an additional 3,300 dunums of land as well as provide water to the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company at Hassa.

He said that the dam has a projected cost of JD18 million according to 1992 statistics and has an estimated timetable of three years until completion.

According to the JVA official, the Jaradneh earthen dam will be constructed in the Maan governorate and this dam will be 15 metres high and boast a storage capacity of 2.3 mcm.

Designs for Al Ghaidan dam in the Wadi Araba region 260 kilometres south-west of Amman have also been completed according to the official who said that it is projected to be 37 metres in height and store 6.2 mcm of water.

The JVA has also finalised designs for Al Waleh and Mujib dams on which construction is expected to begin early next year. The official said that Al Waleh dam will be 45 metres high and will have a storage capacity of 9.3 mcm while the Mujib dam will be 51.5 metres high and reserve 35 mcm of water.

China wins gold in photography contest

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Second International Photographic Show Competition was concluded Thursday at the Royal Cultural Centre with participants from eight countries vying for "the gold."

The exhibition ended in July, and participants submitted photographs for subsequent perusal by a committee.

China received the gold medal for its picturesque view of childhood, Jordan the silver medal for depicting tourist scenes, while Syria and Egypt shared the bronze medal.

Head of Cultural Exchange at the Ministry

of Culture Anwar Zoubi deputised for Minister of Culture Ahmad Qudah in awarding prizes to the winners.

The show was organised by the Jordan Photographic Society and entitled "Peace For This World."

"What could be better [for the cause of peace] than a picture which says more than a thousand words?" President of the Jordan Photographic Society Yahya Massad asked.

The participants represented their respective global peace expressions depicting subjects ranging from childhood and nature to human portraiture.

Mr. Massad lauded the opportunity to host the exhibition and exchange experiences with professional as well as amateur photographers.

"It's special to have these talents all representing their view of the meaning of peace," Mr. Yahya told the Jordan Times.

"Photography is an art, and the photographer is the artist who makes every picture art," he added.

The Jordan Photographic Society was founded in 1994 and is dedicated to strengthening ties among the world's nations, encouraging photography, and incorporating this art into schools' syllabi.

WHAT'S GOING ON

CONCERT

*Performance by the Austrian UNICORN Quintet at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

ITALIAN FILM WEEK

*Two films entitled "Romanzo di un giovane povero" (The Story of a Poor Young Man) and "Una storia semplice" (A Simple Story) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. respectively.

DIALOGUE

*Dialogue with artist Nabil Shehadeh on his works at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

*Bani Hamida Women's Weaving Project '96 fall exhibition "Race the Trend" at Citroen-Dirani Showroom, Shmeisani, until Nov. 3.
*Egyptian products exhibition at the International Exhibition Centre, Marj Al Hamam, until Oct. 29.

*Exhibition of "Visual Forms" by Abdul Latif Al Smoodi at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens St., until Oct. 30.

*Exhibition of children's books at Haya Cultural Centre, until Oct. 29.

*Exhibition entitled "Jerusalem Domes: Doors and Windows" comprising photos by Julia Reinbolt and paintings by Raham Ghassib at The Gallery, the InterContinental Hotel, until Oct. 31.

*Works by Ghada Dahdaleh at the French Cultural Centre, until Oct. 29.

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Perot vows not to quit race; Dole lashes at media

WASHINGTON (R) — Reform Party candidate Ross Perot politely but firmly rejected a plea from Republican Bob Dole to quit the presidential race, leaving Sen. Dole to fume against the voters, the media and President Bill Clinton.

Speaking at the National Press Club in Washington, Mr. Perot declined to directly criticize Sen. Dole, who sent his campaign manager to Dallas Wednesday in a vain attempt to persuade the outspoken Texan to drop out and back Sen. Dole against Mr. Clinton.

"Am I in this for the long haul? Yes. Do I intend to campaign to the bitter end? Yes," Mr. Perot said in response to a question. He called the Dole appeal "weird and totally inconsequential."

Mr. Clinton, meanwhile, campaigning in the Republican-leaning deep south, stayed serenely above the fray, secure in the knowledge that polls remained heavily in his favour with only 12 days to go until the Nov. 5 election.

"Even though our friends on the other side don't like to admit it, we are better off than we were four years ago, and we are moving in the right direction," Mr. Clinton told a rally in Birmingham, Alabama, a state solidly Republican in recent presidential races but where Mr. Clinton is only a

few points behind Sen. Dole.

In his first appearance of the day at Pensacola, Florida, Sen. Dole ignored questions about his Perot overture but sounded angry and admitted he was frustrated.

"This is a very important election. And I know everybody gets frustrated. I even get frustrated and I'm the most optimistic man in America," the former Kansas senator said.

"I wonder sometimes what people are thinking about or if people are thinking at all if they've really watched this administration, watched what's happening in the White House," he said.

"We need to wake America up. It's 12 days away. Wake up, America. You're about to do yourselves an injustice if you vote for Bill Clinton."

Polls showed a slight tightening in the race Thursday — but too little, too late, to suggest a real difference.

The Reuters daily tracking poll had Mr. Clinton leading by around nine percentage points among likely voters. Other surveys put his lead at between 12 and 16 points.

Sen. Dole also targeted what he called "the liberal media," saying it was trying to boost Mr. Clinton to a second term.

"The media will not decide the winner of this

election. You'll decide who wins this election," he said.

Analysts said Sen. Dole's appeal to Mr. Perot would not have helped much even if the Texan had agreed to withdraw, because his support was only in the 4-8 point range.

But some analysts said the appeal and the public rejection it drew made Sen. Dole look weak and could harm him further.

"This admission of weakness could diminish Dole's prospects in the home stretch. It may demoralise Republican activists and potentially hurt the party all the way down the ticket," said American University analyst Mark Rozell.

Relishing a rare opportunity to bask in the spotlight, Mr. Perot launched a bitter attack on Mr. Clinton's ethics and warned that the country was headed for a financial meltdown and a Wall Street crash.

He predicted that Mr. Clinton would soon be engulfed in legal troubles that would paralyse the nation for two years if he were reelected.

"We are heading toward a second Watergate with all this stuff going on and a constitutional crisis in 1997 and just remember you heard it here first," he said in his press club speech, complaining that the media constantly ignored his message.

President Clinton stumped

to his native south Thursday, claiming credit for fighting crime and shrugging off new character attacks from Sen. Dole.

At a rally at the Marrero Action Playground in Jefferson Parish, Mr. Clinton told Louisiana supporters his programme aimed at hiring 100,000 police officers had helped lead to a dramatic reduction in violent crimes and drug crimes in what has been a high-crime neighbourhood.

"This is an example of what we can do when we stop talking and start acting," he told an enthusiastic crowd, asserting that he had taken "crime fighting out of politics" while attacking Republicans for wanting to change his programme.

Under constant attack by Sen. Dole for rising drug abuse among teenagers, Mr. Clinton fired back that Republicans tried to cut back on a programme aimed at creating safe and drug-free schools.

"Drug use is going down in America, folks, big time, but drug use among children under 18 is still going up. The last thing we need to do is cut back on the safe and drug-free schools effort," he said.

He also promoted his proposal for making teenagers take a drug test as part of obtaining a driver's license.



A Russian soldier takes a lunch break in a cabbage field near the city of Serpukhov, some 70 kilometres south of Moscow Thursday. The army, in the old Soviet-style, is still used to help with the harvest on collective farms. Russian Defence Minister Igor Rodionov has appealed recently to President Boris Yeltsin and the government for urgent funds to ease a crisis in the army before matters get out of control (Reuters photo)

Man impersonated police to attract women

MIAMI (R) — Abram Zayas hoped that dressing up as a policeman would attract women. His impersonation was so good he once got a ride from two genuine Miami police officers and turned up at their station the next day to thank them. Now he is in a Dade County jail charged with impersonating a police officer, use of a firearm in a felony, grand theft and burglary. Police spokesman Bill Schwartz said Mr. Zayas, 22, strolled around in a full police uniform and told detectives he wanted to impress women. "You know the old cliché that women love men in uniform? He was willing to break the law to test the theory," Mr. Schwartz said. "I'd be interested to talk to his girlfriends to see if it worked. It hasn't for me," Mr. Schwartz added. The charges related to the theft of two radios from a construction site, which Mr. Zayas allegedly showed up to investigate, and possession of a gun used in the alleged impersonation. Mr. Schwartz was unable to say when Mr. Zayas would appear in court. In July, Mr. Zayas was given a ride home by two police officers who saw him walking down the street in uniform. He told them his car had broken down. The next day he appeared at their station at roll-call to thank them.

Composer choked by fine for eating hamburger

LILLE, France (R) — A 25-year-old French composer is having trouble digesting the results of eating a hamburger in his car — a 230-Franc (\$45) fine levied by two highway policemen. Antoine Deneuville told reporters near the northern French city of Lille that the citation accompanying the fine read: "Driver not in constant position to easily and quickly carry out necessary manoeuvres behind wheel. Was eating sandwich." Mr. Deneuville said the policemen saw him take a bite from the hamburger while briefly halted at a stop sign at a crossroads. He said the car was not moving. French law requires drivers to keep full control of their cars at all times but motorists routinely use car telephones when driving without being stopped by police. The bitter composer said he would write a pop song about the incident.

Sweden blames EU for killing of turtles

STOCKHOLM (R) — Some 1,000 stressed Russian turtles are in the soup in Sweden, doomed by EU regulations. Farm officials said 1,000 sick turtles detected by customs officers would have to be destroyed because of rules laid down by Brussels. Sweden's agricultural authority, Jordbruksverket, said in a statement the turtles had come from Russia but were too ill to be returned there. Many had died since they arrived and most were too stressed by their experience to eat. "All the turtles are in a bad way and it is considered impossible to return them to Russia."

Sex-calls plunge Romania Central Bank into deficit

BUCHAREST (R) — Phone calls to sexy chat-lines by employees have run up huge bills for Romania's Central Bank and broadcast authority, an independent newspaper reported. "Erotic calls punch hole worth millions in budget of state institutions," the Libertatea daily said in a front-page story. The daily said the calls at the bank had been made by guards on long shifts while regular staff were the culprits at the CNA broadcasting authority. They were discovered after the state-run telephone company investigated complaints that phone bills had risen in recent months by the equivalent of tens of thousands of dollars.

China: Taiwan is pawn of Western forces

BEIJING (R) — China said Friday that Taiwan was a pawn and tool of hostile Western forces out to weaken and divide the country and thwart its development.

"Taiwan...acts as a pawn of international anti-Chinese forces, a toy in the hands of others," said a front-page commentary in the People's Daily, the ruling Communist Party's official newspaper.

The commentary, issued to mark the 25th anniversary of Beijing's ousting of Taipei from the United Nations, accused Taiwan of collaborating with forces hostile towards China to try to regain admission to the world body.

"Some Western forces have ceaselessly played the 'human rights card', 'Tibet card' to limit China's development," the commentary said.

"They see the Taiwan issue as one of their trump cards — an important means of weakening and dividing China," it said without naming any countries but implying the United States.

In September, the U.S. House of Representatives approved a non-binding resolution supporting Taiwan's

efforts to rejoin the United Nations, enraging Beijing.

China, which regards Taiwan as a rebel province, maintains that the issue was settled once and for all in 1971, when Taipei was replaced by Beijing at the United Nations.

The commentary said countries that have helped Taiwan with its bid to regain admission to the United Nations were short-sighted like "rats which can only see an inch in front of their eyes."

It urged Taiwan's allies, mainly Central American, African and Caribbean countries, to stop "foolish activities in the interest of others."

For the fourth consecutive year, China and its supporters blocked moves in the General Assembly in September to consider U.N. membership for wealthy but diplomatically isolated Taiwan.

China considers any move to give Taiwan U.N. membership an encroachment on its sovereignty and an interference in its internal affairs.

Beijing and Taipei have been diplomatic rivals since Mao Zedong's Red Army defeated Chiang Kai-Shek's

Nationalists and forced them to flee to Taiwan at the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949.

Beijing's Communist rulers have sought to push the island into diplomatic isolation to force it into reunification. Almost 160 countries recognise Beijing, while 30 have diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

Both Communist Beijing and capitalist Taipei agree to reunify one day, albeit on different terms. China has threatened to invade if the island declares independence.

The commentary said Taiwan's offer to give \$1.0 billion to the United Nations on admission into the world body had become an "international joke."

It jeered at the argument that Taiwan deserved a seat as it was now democratic and economically prosperous, saying the island was "deceiving others and itself."

"No matter what political system Taiwan implemented or what level of economic development it attained...regaining admission to the United Nations would be purely a dream," it said.

Hardline Hindu vows death and destruction over Miss World contest

BANGALORE, India (AFP) — A firebrand Hindu nationalist member of India's parliament has raised the level of rhetoric protesting against the Miss World beauty contest to fever pitch by promising suicides and killings at the event.

Uma Bharati, a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) told a meeting of protestors: "We will give our lives, we will take lives, but we will prevent the Miss World contest."

Ms. Bharati, well known for her hardline, outspoken views, was cheered wildly by around 300 members of the federation of opponents to the Miss World contest meeting here Thursday night.

The event, being hosted in India for the first time, takes place in this southern city next month but protests have continued to mount over the past two months, forcing the organisers to switch the swimsuit section to the Seychelles.

Ananth Kumar, a local BJP politician, told Thursday's meeting: "More than 100,000 people from all over the state of Karnataka will lay siege to the stadium on the night to prevent cultural and economic invasion by Western countries."

A women's group which has vowed to infiltrate the event with suicide squads reiterated the threat.

Sashikala, the leader of the Mahila Jagram (Women's Awareness) group, also said the group would battle with the police outside the venue, earning enthusiastic applause.

Farmers groups who have joined the protests, meanwhile, advocated burning down the stadium to stop the pageant, which runs from Nov. 12-23.

The Amitabh Bachchan Corp. Ltd. (ABCL), which is organising the event, claims opinion polls show that most people in Bangalore support it.

But the company has already announced that the 1997 Miss World will be moved to the Indian Ocean island country of Seychelles, although it said the decision was taken on financial grounds.

Russia may lose control over armed forces — defence minister

MOSCOW (R) — Defence Minister Igor Rodionov said Friday Russia's cash-strapped military was on the brink of "uncontrollable developments."

It said Gen. Rodionov told army veterans a cash shortage, appalling social conditions and poor maintenance was leading to a "severe crisis" in the armed forces.

"Russia's leadership and society should know that the chronic lack of funds is taking the armed forces to the brink of undesirable, and even uncontrollable, developments," Interfax quoted Gen. Rodionov as saying.

"If the 1997 defence budget is not changed, Russia may lose the armed forces as an integral and active state structure, with all the consequences which would follow that," he said, but gave no details.

Gen. Rodionov said the draft budget, rejected by par-



Russian Defence Minister Igor Rodionov (right) and Interior Minister Anatoly Kulikov study a memorial book of Russian servicemen killed during conflicts in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Chechnya Friday (Reuters photo)

liament earlier this week, covered only one-third of the minimum needs of the armed forces.

Russia's former national security chief, Alexander Lebed, sacked by President Boris Yeltsin last week, has said the armed forces are on the brink of rebellion.

At the time, Gen. Rodionov rejected Gen. Lebed's predic-

tions, saying the military was under control and there was no reason to expect any sort of mutiny in the armed forces.

Gen. Rodionov also said he strongly supported the idea of reforming the huge and largely ineffective armed forces which Russia inherited from the now-defunct Soviet Union.

Yeltsin urges political forces to unite

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin urged all the country's political forces and power structures to unite Friday after weeks of intense rivalry in the Kremlin.

In a seven-minute speech on national radio, Mr. Yeltsin vowed to serve his whole four-year term as president and criticised those who sought political advantage while he was awaiting a heart bypass operation set for late November.

The welfare of the Russian people "calls for everybody to unite — parliament, the government, the presidential administration, regional leaders and representatives of the various political parties and social and political movements," Mr. Yeltsin said.

"I will secure agreement between the power structures and unite their efforts," he pledged, citing his recent move to hold regular meetings of senior officials from the government, presidential administration and parliament.

"Agreement between the power structures must be accompanied by unity throughout society. Therefore we must stop dividing ourselves into reds and whites, us' and

them," said Mr. Yeltsin, who was re-elected on July 3, beating Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov.

Despite several setbacks for pro-Yeltsin candidates in regional elections recently, the Russian leader vowed to "cooperate as closely as possible" with regional governors. The local elections are to continue until mid-January.

Since early October Mr. Yeltsin has been resting at Barvikha, an official residence just west of Moscow, and political rivalry in the Kremlin has intensified in his absence, culminating in the ousting of security supremo Alexander Lebed last week.

Gen. Lebed has made no secret of his presidential ambitions, and his dismissal failed to silence his war of words with the powerful Presidential Chief of Staff Anatoly Chubais and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, warned his political rivals Friday to forget their presidential aspirations until his Kremlin term expires in 2000.

"I want to remind Russian politicians that for the next four years, Russia has made its choice," Mr. Yeltsin said. "It is time to abandon the presidential race, it is time

to work. Stop the struggle for influence, for posts, stop the criticism and the constant meetings. Russia is going forward and the solution to its problems demands an understanding from society."

He vowed to dismiss any officials who spent their time "squabbling instead of working."

In a direct appeal to ordinary Russians who are more concerned about their daily bread than political infighting, Mr. Yeltsin said that bickering among politicians was "discrediting the authorities and undermining the citizens' trust in the state."

"The problems worrying people, the issues on which prosperity and sometimes even people's lives depend, meanwhile remain unresolved," Mr. Yeltsin added, in his third radio address since Oct. 3.

Mr. Yeltsin had avoided public appearances or speeches since suffering a heart attack just before the July 3 second round of the presidential elections — his third in 15 months.

Naina Yeltsin said on television Thursday that her husband wanted to undergo his planned heart bypass operation as soon as possible.

Coverup charged over Japan cult killing

TOKYO (R) — A policeman who belonged to the Aum Shinri Kyo cult accused of last year's Tokyo subway attack has confessed to shooting Japan's police chief at the height of probes into the sect, government officials said Friday.

But in a development equally shocking to many Japanese, newspapers also reported that the man's confession was covered up in a bid to protect the already scarred reputation of the country's law enforcement agencies.

The newspaper reports said the 31-year-old policeman had not been arrested despite being questioned for the past few months and he was still on the police force in Tokyo.

The reports on the front page are shocking, chief government spokesman Seiroku Kajiyama told reporters.

"I have received reports that a policeman who was a member of the cult is being questioned (about his confession)," Home Affairs Minister Hiroyuki Kurata told reporters.

The confession came to light Friday in newspaper followups of anonymous

letters they received in mid-October revealing the confession. Newspapers also published an anonymous letter which warned of an "horrific" coverup.

National Police Agency (NPA) Chief Takaji Kunimatsu was shot as he left home on March 30, 1995, 10 days after sarin nerve gas was released in Tokyo's subway system during the morning rush hour.

Chief Kunimatsu was shot four times from about 20 metres away by a masked man as he left his Tokyo apartment building.

After spending three months in hospital, he resumed his duties and is still Japan's police chief.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Police Agency, the local force in charge of the subway investigation, and the NPA said they had no comment to make on the reports.

Police have blamed doomsday cult Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth Sect) for the subway gas attack, which killed 12 people and made about 6,000 ill. The sect's guru, Shoko Asahara, and about 100 cult members are on trial for the attack.

In his confession, the 31-

year-old policeman said he shot Chief Kunimatsu on the orders of senior cult members to disrupt investigations the police chief was leading into the attack, police sources said.

But newspapers said the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Agency did not pass on the confession to the nationwide NPA because the man gave conflicting testimony and "still appeared to be controlled by cult doctrine."

Under Japan's law enforcement system, prefectural police forces are in charge of day-to-day operations in their areas while the NPA supervises investigations that cross prefectural boundaries like in the subway attack.

"The criminal who shot Chief Kunimatsu... is a Metropolitan Police Department officer. He has already admitted to the shooting after we questioned him at a facility," the anonymous letter received by newspapers said.

"The investigations are halted by orders from authorities in the Tokyo Metropolitan Police. The move to turn this into an unsolved case and silence the suspect to save the organisation is horrific."

Man impersonates police to attract women

MIAMI — A man impersonated a police officer to attract women, police said. The man, who was 30 years old, was seen in a Miami police officer's uniform, complete with a badge and a walkie-talkie. He was seen in a public place, and was seen talking to several women. The police officer, who was seen in a public place, was seen talking to several women. The police officer, who was seen in a public place, was seen talking to several women.

Composer chole by fine for eating hamburger

Sweden blame EU for killing turtles



Zairean militia stop along a mountain path as they withdraw from the frontline some 40 kilometres outside Bukavu. Ethnic Tutsi rebels are now in control of territory in South Kivu province. Some 200,000 Rwandan and Burundian refugees are now thought to have fled the fighting (Reuters photo)

Cuba missile crisis tapes reveal a cautious Kennedy

BOSTON (R) — A cautious U.S. President John F. Kennedy repeatedly resisted calls from his military advisers for an attack on Cuba during the 1962 missile crisis, according to White House recordings released Thursday.

Declassified and released to the public exactly 34 years after the October 1962 confrontation, the secret 15 hours and 19 minutes of recordings give historians a fuller picture of the Kennedy White House. The recordings include meetings in the Oval Office and cabinet room from Oct. 18-29, just after spy plane photographs revealed the former Soviet Union was installing offensive nuclear missile sites in Cuba, 145 kilometres from Florida.

In an Oct. 19 meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Defence Secretary Robert McNamara, Kennedy concluded that an air strike against Cuba would give the Soviets a "clear line" to invade Berlin.

Minutes later, U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Curtis LeMay compared a proposed naval blockade with Western appeasement of Nazi Germany before World War II.

By Oct. 23, the president decided on the blockade around Cuba to try to force the Soviets to dismantle the nuclear sites and remove all offensive weapons from the island.

"What we are doing is throwing down a card on the table in a game which we don't know the ending of," Kennedy said at the meeting.

Rare emotional outbursts in otherwise calm discussions during the tense period reveal just how close the two superpowers came to a nuclear exchange.

"My God... I think it was very significant that we were here this morning. We passed the one contingency — an immediate, sudden, irrational (nuclear) strike (by the Soviets)," U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk said on Oct. 23.

The day after Kennedy announced to the

world the Soviet missile build-up.

An unidentified speaker, referring to the president's brother, U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy, said at one meeting on a possible U.S. invasion of Cuba: "Suppose we make Bobby mayor of Havana?"

At another point, there was laughter in the cabinet room when Kennedy speculated the United States would stop a Soviet ship headed for Cuba, tow it to a U.S. port for inspection before discovering it only contained baby food.

The Cuban missile crisis was defused on Oct. 28 when Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev agreed to remove nuclear weapons from Cuba.

For national security reasons, 27 minutes of the recordings, released by the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston, were deleted of references to intelligence sources and methods, said library foreign policy architect Stephanie Fawcett.

The tapes were likely installed for Kennedy's memoirs and were activated by hidden switches at his desk in the Oval Office and at his chair in the cabinet room, she said.

The crude recordings are somewhat indecipherable, catching squeaking chairs, pipes being banged on ashtrays, and other outside noises. They were probably done with only the president's knowledge, Ms. Fawcett said.

"The chances are there are no blockbusters (revelations), considering it's been 34 years, but what you will get is the president in action," Ms. Fawcett told reporters at the library.

"You are literally a fly on the wall," she said.

More than 200 hours of Kennedy White House recordings from July 1962 to just weeks before he was assassinated in November 1963 were expected to be declassified over the next five years under a 1995 federal law requiring swift release of all sensitive materials, Ms. Fawcett said.

Burma: Suu Kyi not restricted, aide is still held

RANGOON (R) — Burmese democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi is free to leave her house although earlier this week she was urged to stay inside to avoid meeting student protesters, a senior government official said Friday.

Diplomats had quoted senior National League for Democracy (NLD) party official Tin Oo as saying this week that Ms. Suu Kyi, who was released from arrest in July last year, had been confined to her compound.

But the government official told Reuters: "People in charge of security, our people and those from the NLD, suggested to her it was not safe for her to go out because kids were having a sit-in protest at a junction nearby."

"She understood and she complied. But there are no restrictions on her at all," he added.

Ms. Suu Kyi could not be reached for comment as a road leading to her house has been blocked with barricades manned by security police and her telephone line has apparently been cut.

The official also said Kyi Maung, NLD deputy chairman and close aide to the Nobel Peace laureate, was still being held for questioning Friday by the military government for his role in the protest staged this week.

Up to 1,000 university students held a rare sit-in protest early Wednesday at an intersection about two kilometres from Ms. Suu Kyi's residence.

Mr. Kyi Maung was detained for questioning Wednesday for his role in the protests after he was seen speaking to two students before the demonstration.

The official said Mr. Kyi Maung had been detained at a government guest house.

He did not say when Mr. Kyi Maung would be released.

"He is not in prison," the official said.

The students staged the demonstration to protest against the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council's (SLORC) and its handling of a recent scuffle involving students at a food stall.

The United States, Britain and human rights organisations have called for the immediate release of Mr. Kyi Maung, who was in Rangoon's infamous Insein Prison from 1990 to 1995 for his role in democracy movement activities in Burma.

Police shooting at traffic stop sparks riot in Florida city

MIAMI, Florida (AFP) — Fires blazed around the central Florida city of St. Petersburg and angry rioters threw rocks and bottles at police and reporters late Thursday after a police shooting with racial overtones.

At the height of the violence, 300 to 500 officers were deployed in the area, including those from two neighboring counties and the highway patrol, said St. Petersburg police spokeswoman Lilla Davis.

"They are in riot gear now. I'm not sure if we're going to remain that way. I'm hoping that the situation will have calmed down," said Ms. Davis. "I hope and pray that this doesn't continue on through the weekend."

Cross racial police shootings or beatings have caused riots in such diverse cities as Miami, Los Angeles and Washington in the past 10 years.

The shooting of a Hispanic man by a black police officer caused riots in Washington in 1991, in Los Angeles the following year riots broke out after white cops accused of beating a black motorist were acquitted.

This most recent incident began about 5:30 p.m. (2130 GMT), when a white

police officer shot and killed a black man during a traffic stop, said Ms. Davis.

"A crowd of 300 or 400 started gathering and threw rocks and bottles at the police," said Ms. Davis.

Journalists who rushed to the primarily black and poor neighbourhood were also attacked, and a media truck was one of at least three vehicles that were torched, said Ms. Davis.

"It's just utter chaos," said a police dispatcher. "We have officers injured, quite a few of them."

Thick smoke towered over a 20-block area as angry rioters set fire to a post office, furniture store, food market and several homes.

Officer in riot gear and carrying plastic shields to fend off debris and rocks tried to contain the violence by barricading streets.

"It's scary," said resident Scott Comrie. "You can see police getting knocked down, mothers running with their children, and cars and buildings on fire."

Six police, one firefighter and four reporters were among the 12 to 14 people injured, but none seriously, said Ms. Davis.

Riot police formed a perimeter around the area, and firefighters were unable to get near the blazes because

of the violence.

The worst came between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. (2300 GMT to 0100 GMT) and the city largely returned to calm by 10 p.m. (0200 GMT), said Ms. Davis.

About 20 people were arrested "for inciting a riot," she said.

The incident began when officers pursued a speeding car with two people inside. The car stopped, but as officers walked up to it, the car jumped forward and struck an officer.

Officer Jim Knight, a 34-year-old, eight-year veteran of the force, opened fire and struck the driver, who died on the way to the hospital.

Officer Knight is now the subject of a criminal investigation, said Ms. Davis, who said he had been a patrol officer in St. Petersburg and a community policing officer.

Perkins Shelton, a local leader and former National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) branch official, said that the city problems such as racism, a polarised society and drugs lay the groundwork for the riot.

"St. Petersburg is no different from the rest of America. You'd have to be black in St. Petersburg to feel it. It's something you have to live with every day," he said.

Ethnic Tutsi rebels out to seize Bukavu, oust Zairean leader

KIGALI (AFP) — Ethnic Tutsi rebels fighting Zairean government troops intend to capture the town of Bukavu, capital of South Kivu province, and want to topple President Mobutu Sese Seko, a rebel spokesman said Friday.

A spokesman for the Banyamulenge rebels made the statement in the Rwandan capital Kigali as relief workers said armed ethnic Tutsis were Friday fighting soldiers on the outskirts of Uvira, south of Bukavu.

Muller Ruhimbika, spokesman for the Banyamulenge's Democratic Alliance of the People (ADP), said that the ethnic Tutsis of Rwandan origin had captured several towns in eastern Zaire and planned to link up with forces fighting in North Kivu.

The Banyamulenge were effectively in control of the port of Uvira on Lake Tanganyika, whence hundreds of thousands of Hutu refugees fled fighting earlier this week, but have not entered the town because there are still women and children there, Mr. Ruhimbika said.

He added that more than 1,000 Banyamulenge civilians

had been massacred since the start of the conflict, but there was no independent confirmation of this claim.

"There have not been many deaths among our ranks," he added, in reference to the guerrillas.

Humanitarian sources in Bukumbura, capital of Burundi which borders on the Vira region, said Banyamulenge rebels had during the night fired mortar shells at the town, 30 kilometres from Bukumbura on the opposite shore of Lake Tanganyika.

"Uvira is probably going to fall. Inhabitants are currently fleeing southwards. Very few are coming to Burundi," one source said.

Those fighting the Zairean army were not only Banyamulenge but also other tribes in Zaire, grouped in three opposition parties, the Popular Revolutionary Party (PRP), the National Resistance Council for Democracy (CNRD) and the Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Zaire (MRLZ), Mr. Ruhimbika said.

They have formed an alliance, he said.

"We are not fighting for the whole of Zaire," he added. "Mobutu must go."

Marshal Mobutu is currently in Lausanne, Switzerland, recovering from an operation for prostate cancer. Iron ruler of his sprawling country since 1965, he has been absent as strife between Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda and Burundi has triggered the fighting in eastern Zaire.

More than a million Hutu refugees from the two central African countries are camped in eastern Zaire, many of them Rwandans reluctant to return home for fear of reprisals for the 1994 genocide of Tutsis and moderate Hutus before the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) won a civil war that year.

Burundi is in the grip of a guerrilla war between Hutu extremists and a Tutsi-dominated regime and army.

Zaire has accused both countries of sending troops to fight alongside the Banyamulenge, who, according to Mr. Ruhimbika, are now Zaireans. The Kigali and Bukumbura regimes have denied this.

Mr. Ruhimbika said the Tutsi rebels neither wanted

to secede nor to set up the "Hima (Tutsi) empire" feared by the Hutus and Bantus of the Great Lakes region.

"We want our Zairean nationality recognised," he said. "We did not have any other political objectives, but of course, now that we have been joined by other forces, things have changed."

The ADP spokesman added that a potential meeting between Zairean Prime Minister Kengo Wa Dondo and Rwandan RPF leader, Vice-President and Defence Minister Paul Kagame "will serve no purpose, except perhaps to thaw relations between the two countries."

European and U.S. diplomats have been making intensive efforts to bring about talks to prevent the whole region from plunging into warfare and stop a massive humanitarian crisis.

"The Kinshasa authorities must negotiate with us," Mr. Ruhimbika said. "In the next two months, other groups are going to rise up elsewhere. Mobutu knows that."

California fires contained, but new wind fears

LOS ANGELES (R) — Firefighters were close to controlling a series of devastating wildfires in southern California Thursday but feared hot desert winds over the weekend could spark more blazes.

Fire crews mopped up as the main Pacific Coast highway near Malibu and roads through the Santa Monica Mountains opened to rush-hour traffic after three days.

The wind-blown wildfires erupted Monday from the movie star colony of Malibu to mountains along the Mexican border, destroying or damaging more than 100 homes, injuring 11 people and burning some 35,000 acres (14,000 hectares) of land.

Firefighters said the blaze in Malibu, which burned nearly 15,000 acres (6,000 hectares), was 80 per cent contained Thursday morning and there were no more flames. The huge fire that

destroyed 80 homes further south near the town of Carlsbad was expected to be fully contained by Thursday evening, the California Department of Forestry said.

Firefighters said a blaze near the Mexican border at Otay mountain was 50 per cent contained. No homes were threatened.

Despite gaining the upper hand, authorities were bracing for a possible flare-up at the weekend, when hot Santa Ana winds were expected to kick up again.

"At this point it appears that Saturday and Sunday will be the peak of the Santa Ana event," the National Weather Service said. It predicted winds of 30-40 mph (48-64 kph) with gusts of more than 60 mph (96 kph).

One fireman seriously burned Tuesday when a wall of flames jumped a road in a canyon north of Los Angeles was to undergo surgery Friday. He suffered

burns over 60 per cent of his body and respiratory problems.

On Wednesday, President Bill Clinton declared portions of California a disaster area because of the wildfires. "Due to the devastating effects of the southern California fires, I am declaring that a major emergency exists in the state," he said in a statement issued by the White House.

"As a result, federal funds will begin to flow immediately to the people and communities affected by this tragedy," Mr. Clinton said. The action makes federal aid available to Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties.

A troublesome fire in the scenic big sur area on the central California coast grew to 2,750 acres (1,100 hectares) Thursday, forcing the evacuation of campers from Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park and of guests from the

Ghali calls for larger U.N. role to fight terrorism

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali called Thursday for a binding international agreement that would commit states to steps aimed at ending global terrorism.

"The time has come for the International Community to work toward the achievement of a general international instrument of a binding nature against terrorism," Dr. Ghali said in a speech at Harvard University in Massachusetts.

"For lack of international agreement on the legal framework for the fight against international terrorism, the approach adopted so far has been sectoral and partial."

He said the United Nations can help bring states together in the fight and provide a legal framework for anti-terrorism measures.

Dr. Ghali told the Kennedy School of government audience the fight against terrorism has a personal side, because his grandfather, the prime minister of Egypt, was assassinated by terrorists.

And "I was with (Egyptian) President Anwar Sadat on his historic trip to Jerusalem, to Camp David, and at the signing of the treaty of peace between Egypt and Israel. For these achievements, President Sadat was assassinated by terrorists and I have to live with this threat," he said.

He said that while terrorism has been around through history, it has changed in recent years.

"In the cold war years, terrorists were primarily motivated by ideology," Dr. Ghali said in the speech, the text of which was released here.

"They carried out terror in order to claim credit and gain attention for their cause."

"Today, terrorists motivated by religious extremism may care nothing for publicity. Their silence makes them all the more difficult to locate."

Dr. Ghali said that the U.N., as the hub of international cooperation, is the best forum to ensure that the "antiterrorist struggle is not pursued at the expense of human rights."

Italy renews call for United Nations reform

ROME (R) — Italy made a new call Thursday for reform of the United Nations, saying the world body was in need of greater democracy and increased efficiency.

In a message to Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to mark United Nations Day, President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro said the aims and objectives on which the U.N. was founded after World War II remained valid. But he added:

"The instruments and the way of operating in the U.N. have got to be brought up to date with new challenges and new tasks."

"In particular, reforms which will ensure greater democracy, more equal geographic representation, efficiency and transparency need to be adopted."

He said greater efficiency could be achieved only if all member states were involved "giving them the chance...to

make their own voice heard in all major decision-making bodies" regardless of their size or geographical location.

Italy has long proposed a reform of the U.N. Security Council by adding to the system of five permanent members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — with veto powers and 10 rotating members which serve for two years terms. Italy is currently one of the 10.

It wants a third tier added of 20 countries, of which it would be one, which would rotate every two years in two groups as semi-permanent members.

"We...have to stimulate a bigger involvement of all countries, big and small, through a rotation mechanism," Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini said in a speech in Rome Thursday night devoted to U.N. reform.

Punishment sought for Venezuela jail fire culprits

CARACAS (R) — Three national guardsmen who seem to have deliberately started a fire that killed 25 inmates in a crowded Venezuelan jail cell must be brought to justice, officials and human rights groups said Thursday.

"There is sufficient proof and the guilty must be punished," Mr. Meier said.

Prisoners have said the fire began after an argument broke out between inmates and guards during an early morning roll call. About 40 inmates were trapped inside the small cell.

Some prisoners managed to crawl to safety through a small hole in the roof. The

rest died engulfed in flames.

"It was a totally arbitrary, inhumane and unforgivable act," Mr. Meier said.

The mother of one victim said guards had told inmates last week they would carry out a massacre. "He told us that they were afraid because a guard told them he was going to burn them alive," Carmen Sanchez told Union radio.

But rights activists said that even overwhelming evidence may not be enough to bring those responsible to justice. "Our

fear is that after one to two years they will be free," Raul Cubas, general coordinator of local rights group Provea, told Reuters.

"As normally the justice here doesn't punish officials who violate human rights they don't fear the consequences of their actions," Mr. Cubas said.

Apart from the military trial, two civil courts have opened investigations into the tragedy, creating confusion and a conflict of interests, activists said.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975
صباح الخير يومية عربية مستقلة أسست من قبل المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

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Defining future bonds

THE FULL impact of President Jacques Chirac's visit to the Middle East cannot be instantly measured or assessed since its dimensions transcend the immediate concerns of the peace process and touch upon issues that have seldom been aired out or addressed with such depth as outlined by him. When the French president raised the religious factor in the relationship between the West and this part of the world and the inter-dependence between the three monotheistic faiths, he has in effect underscored the depth and full import of this religious and cultural relationship and gave it an added significance in the context of the ongoing search for permanent solutions to the conflicts of the region. By rejecting altogether the thesis of sceptics and pessimists that the conflict between different religions and cultures is inevitable, Mr. Chirac has convincingly dismissed the doomsday scenario between Islam and Christianity in particular. By outlining the link between the three major religions of the world and their common denominators, President Chirac has effectively presented religion as a positive element that is potentially supportive of peace in the region rather than as an inevitable divisive issue.

This submission is a major contribution by the French president to inter-faith dialogue that stands to lay the groundwork for both an effective and lasting peace between the peoples of the area and constructive relations between the West and the Near East, Islam, Christianity and Judaism, the president emphasised at his joint press-conference with His Majesty King Hussein at the conclusion of his official visit to the country on Thursday, are destined to reach a common ground wherever they may exist especially in the Mediterranean basin because they share more common values than differences. By way of a historical footnote, Mr. Chirac also drew attention to the early valued contributions of Islam to the Western civilisation in science, mathematics, astronomy, music, engineering, humanities and philosophy and the contemporary support that that Western civilisation has made to the modern Arab World. This inter-action, the president inferred, must continue so that the peoples of the three monotheistic faiths can forge not only peaceful but also mutually beneficial relationships on all levels.

We must voice our deep and profound appreciation of Mr. Chirac's injection of the religious and cultural factors in the quest for a lasting peace regime in the Middle East and for more broadly based contacts between Islam and Christianity. We say so out of recognition and appreciation of the proposition that there can be no true peace between the peoples of the region in the absence of a constructive and positive dialogue between Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Peace in the Middle East requires a culture for peace and this calls for continued dialogue and understanding among the three worldly faiths.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

WITH THE visit of President Chirac to the Middle East, France has marked its reentry into the region, determined to help its people to pursue the course of peace, security and stability, said Sultan Hattab who writes for Al Ra'i daily. Unlike the United States, France is keen on following a stable and balanced role in the Arab-Israeli area and it is assuming this role with bravery, clarity and honesty, said the writer. Referring to the French president's visit to Israel, the writer said he was brave enough to tell the Israelis that the time has come for the creation of a Palestinian state without which there can be no peace in the whole region and that security cannot be maintained by force but rather by compliance with the requirements of a just and durable peace. Now that the Arab and French positions vis-a-vis the Middle East question are almost identical, the Arabs are urged to put their weight behind the brave French leader and his government's drive to achieve a lasting peace and restore for the Palestinians their rights in their homeland.

AL DUSTOUR daily discussed the French-Jordanian economic relations, paying tribute to France's continued assistance to the Kingdom which, in 1996 alone, has amounted to 80 million francs. The paper lauded France's contribution to the implementation of Jordanian economic schemes and its help to Jordan in the wake of the Gulf crisis which brought heavy burdens to the Kingdom. Motivated by the drive to help enhance the peace process, France has been very generous with the countries of this region at the economic level which, the paper said, is an essential element for building peace. The paper said Jordanian-French economic cooperation will continue as it has vast opportunities ahead, leading to a genuine partnership not only between the Kingdom and France but rather between Jordan and the rest of the European nations.

Jordanian Perspective

Chirac's visit could mean reshaping of EU role in Mideast peace process

THE EVENT of last week in the Middle East was, of course, the visit of French President Jacques Chirac who forcefully sought to add a strong colour to the European involvement in Arab-Israeli peacemaking. No doubt the French political positions and support for the legitimate Arab causes were why Mr. Chirac was given a hero's welcome in Syria, infuriated Israeli security forces in Arab East Jerusalem, was warmly greeted in the Palestinian territories and given perhaps the most enthusiastic greeting and treatment that Jordan every accorded to a visiting head of state.

Of course, President Chirac is a very dear friend of Jordan. We had always expected him to adopt a fair-handed approach in the Middle East and he did not disappoint us either. In fact, his clear and blunt calls on Israel to accept Palestinian independence and withdraw from Syria's Golan Heights, as well as South Lebanon, established beyond any doubt that France stands solidly behind the just Arab demands for justice and international legitimacy as the basis of any peace settlement with Israel.

Beyond the Middle East peace process, Mr. Chirac made a strong case against an eternal continuation of the international sanctions against Iraq, by affirming that an end to the crippling embargo against that country should come as and when Baghdad fulfills its commitment under the relevant Security Council resolutions and nothing else. Obviously, he was implicitly referring to additional U.S.-imposed terms and conditions, albeit ambiguous, on Baghdad outside the framework of the United Nations.

The Chirac visit has indeed left behind strong waves in the Middle East peace process. But what will their effects be?

Are the U.S. and Israel going to accept a strong European

Union (EU) role in Arab-Israeli peacemaking, knowing very well that such a role would actually correct the imbalance against the Arabs? We all know that the EU is not demanding to physically participate in Arab-Israeli peace negotiations but only that its political views are taken into consideration while Israeli tries to push its U.S.-backed ideas down the Arab throat. The collective American-Israeli refusal to even entertain any idea of enhancing the EU role beyond that of a banker in the peace process speaks volumes for the U.S. and Israeli perceptions of any settlement with the Arabs, particularly the Palestinians.

Another negative factor in any EU quest to advance the European role in Arab-Israeli peacemaking are the differences among EU member states themselves over the issue. At least one prominent member of the union has made it abundantly clear that it does not subscribe to the French-led initiative and has no intention whatsoever to support it in broader EU discussions on the subject.

We do not know how far Mr. Chirac will be successful in convincing his counterparts in the EU that, given the key European interests and traditionally strong European ties with the Middle East, the bloc should not take a secondary role to anyone in the region and continue to write out cheques to support whatever agreements resulting from the U.S.-dominated peace negotiations.

At this moment, when the Israelis and Palestinians are thrashing out a security deal over Hebron, a European role may not seem extremely relevant because the Hebron accord, per se, is secondary. What we definitely need, however, is a strong European involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian final status negotiations that would seek solutions to the core questions that remain unanswered over the fate of refugees, Jewish settlements and the status of

Jerusalem.

We could only hope that some formula could be found to bring about a strong EU role in the final status negotiations, whether the U.S. and Israel like it or not. There cannot be any alternative to such an EU role, given that we in Jordan and the Arab and Muslim worlds at large cannot simply sit back and let Israelis dictate their take-it-or-leave-it terms to the Palestinians on the thorny problems like refugees, Jewish settlements and Jerusalem.

We could only see as naive the American rejection of such EU involvement. Washington should appreciate that any just solution to the Middle East conflict should address the legitimate Arab demands and that if the U.S., because of domestic politics, cannot pressure Israel, then it should implicitly make room for someone who can and will. If the U.S. could in fact turn its thinking in this direction, that will be a turning point in Arab-Israeli peacemaking.

On the bilateral front, President Chirac's visit to Jordan helped consolidate Amman-Paris relations and economic cooperation. In addition, there is the implicit promise that Jordan secured from France that Paris stands ready to help the Kingdom further as and when circumstances warrant such action. Such a commitment from friends like France is very important for Jordan to face any eventuality in the course of advancing its quest to achieve the goals of its economic reform programme.

On the whole, we Jordanians have every reason to be fully satisfied with the visit of the French president and to entertain hopes that the outcome Mr. Chirac's talks with the leaders of the region would be a forceful factor in reshaping not only European policies vis-a-vis the Middle East but also in shaping a new European involvement in the Arab-Israeli peacemaking.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

'France keen on safeguarding the principles of justice, freedom and peace for all people'

REVIEWED BY
ELIA NASRALLAH

THE LOCAL Arabic dailies, accorded French President Jacques Chirac a warm welcome, with nearly all their columnists lauding France's endeavours to help the Palestinians regain their legitimate rights and help the Arab countries enjoy durable peace. The newspapers also discussed Israel's procrastination to implement agreements with the Palestinians and dealt with a number of domestic affairs. Discussing Mr. Chirac's address to the Parliament, Al Ra'i Arabic daily described it as historic and coming from a man who truly represents the spirit of the French revolution and is marked by a spirit with which the Arab Nation has much in common.

The paper said that the president shed light on historical facts about the region and the historic and cultural links between the Arabs and the Europeans over the past centuries, stressing that France has proved to be keen on safeguarding the principles of justice, freedom and peace for all people.

Writing under the title "What we require from Chirac", Fahed Faneh, a writer for Al Ra'i, said that Jordan is keen on protecting its interests and hopes that the French leader would extend a helping hand. We want France to grant us economic and technological assistance, but, at the same time, we should give France preference over other countries in trade and we want France to explicitly and practically express its confidence in our country and do all it can to bolster our national economy in the industrial, agricultural and other fields, said the writer. We want France to write off Jordan's debts to the French government and we want to have a genuine friendship treaty with France which would guarantee permanent economic and political cooperation, he added. Any person in his right senses in the Arab World cannot but warmly welcome France's reentry into the Middle East region to

counter the U.S.-Israeli hegemony and to help put an end to Israel's arrogance, said Yasser Zaidat, a writer for Al Dustour.

Mr. Chirac's visit to the region and his open and explicit policies to support of the Palestinians and their rights speak for themselves and prove to the world that Europe stands against aggression and occupation, said the writer. He added that Mr. Chirac's open support for a Palestinian state, his stand against Israel's aggression on Lebanon in April of this year and his endeavours to lift sanctions imposed on Iraq provide clear evidence of France's new stand.

The writer said that Mr. Chirac's policies are bound to be confronted by the strong Jewish lobby inside France and so the Arab states are required to stand behind the French president and his government to help him defeat the hostile forces at home. Yousef Mahmoud, a writer for Al Ra'i, referred in an article to Mr. Chirac's clear statements during his visit to Palestine and said that the French leader has openly declared his country's support for an independent Palestinian state, an end to Jewish settlement programmes and an end to occupation.

The writer said that the Arab Nation as a whole deeply appreciates the French president's stands which support Arab rights and world justice and they will never forget France's economic assistance to the Arabs, in general, and Jordan and the Palestinians in particular.

Hamadeh Faraaneh, a writer for Al Dustour, referred to Mr. Chirac's visit to the occupied Arab lands in Palestine and the shameful Israeli behaviour towards the French leader and said that the Israelis have displayed their hostile attitude to the president who openly supports the principles of justice.

The writer said that indeed, the French president and his open support for the Palestinians have disturbed the Israelis who have been accustomed to find absolute support from Europe.

The writer said that France,

has won respect and appreciation from the Arabs who displayed a warm welcome for the president because he is opening a dialogue between his country and the Arab Nation, trying to establish peace based on justice in the region and trying to develop the strongest possible economic links with the Arab World.

Despite the opposition of the Jewish lobby in France and in defiance of the Israeli arrogance, the French president seems determined to pursue his eveo-handed policy and support the principles of justice, said Mohammad Kharroub, a writer for Al Ra'i.

The writer said that Mr. Chirac's tour of the region and his open and candid statements about the Arab-Israeli conflict and the rights of the Palestinians serve as a manifestation of the French stand. Indeed, France's current role is bound to be copied by its European allies, added the writer. Mr. Chirac's stand gives the Arabs new hope that the world community will sooner rather than later take appropriate steps to bring about justice and deal with the problems that have kept the Middle East in turmoil for decades.

Commenting on the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian negotiations over the implementation of the Oslo agreements, Ahmad Mistleh, a writer for Al Ra'i, said that these U.S.-sponsored negotiations are going round in a vicious circle and achieving nothing.

If the talks are centred on the redeployment of Israeli forces in Hebron, the two sides do not need so much time and effort to set a plan if the Israelis are truly committed to the implementation of the requirements of peace, said the writer. But it seems that Israel wants to reach a final settlement with regard to Hebron at this stage and impose its will on the Palestinians, said the writer who mentioned Israel's drive to reopen the Oslo agreements with the intention of imposing new conditions on their adversaries to achieve that goal.

The writer said that the Palestinian negotiators, who reject Israel's plans, should remain adamant and steadfast and seek a final settlement only after the redeployment issue has been settled.

A writer for Al Dustour said that the ongoing negotiations over Hebron do not mean negotiations on a final settlement to the whole Palestinian problem. Of course the Palestinians want to see the redeployment of Israeli forces achieved, but they are also determined to enter into negotiations on a final settlement, said Taber Adwan. The final settlement, he said, should offer solution to the refugees problem, the status of Jerusalem and the existence of the Jewish settlements on Arab lands. In order to carry out a successful battle over a final settlement, the Palestinians need to follow in the footsteps of Syria and Egypt, which demanded that no single Israeli settlement can remain standing on Arab soil if peace is to be guaranteed.

Mohammad Daoud, a writer for Al Dustour, dwelt on the Amman Municipality's achievements in the past few years, describing the municipal council and the mayor as dedicated people who realise the actual needs of their country and the residents of its capital. The writer referred in particular to the creation of public gardens and the plantation of large numbers of trees to stem the desertification danger coming from the east.

The municipality is determined to green the Amman area and its suburbs and fight off the encroachment of the desert, he added. The writer lauded the municipality's efforts to open new roads, which are of paramount importance for an ever-expanding city, and its endeavours to build a stadium for the eastern sections of the capital. He said that the residents of Amman can only express their admiration at these numerous achievements.

East Asia — Europeans are catching up

By Gerald Segal

HONG KONG — East Asia, mesmerised by its meteoric economic growth, might be tempted to think that Europe is a long way from matching Asia's dynamism. But consider the following scenario:

The members of the European Union (EU) create a single currency, reform their welfare states and, as their large cohort of elderly people die out, emerge with high savings rates and cutting edge expertise in knowledge-based industries.

Contrast this success with a future East Asia where the demographic bulge is reaching its peak. Savings rates have fallen, and burdensome welfare systems will have to be created because traditional family support networks in Asia break down under the strain just as surely as they did in Europe.

Moreover, by stifling democratic forces for so long, some East Asian societies may be poorly placed to produce the innovation and creativity necessary to succeed in the knowledge- and information-based economy of the 21st century.

To make matters worse, all that speculative capital that used to wreak havoc with European currencies and economies may begin shaking Asian markets. Agreements between central banks in Asia to defend one another's currencies will not ward off the attacks because speculators will strike several markets simultaneously.

Preposterous? Such a future may be some time off, but in recent months there have been portents of what might be.

The drive by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum to bring free trade and investment to the region is flagging. Supporters of APEC activism, including the United States and Australia, are in retreat.

The economic outlook for East Asia is clouded. Growth in many of the region's economies is declining, due partly to a worldwide downturn in the electronic sector. It now appears that trade between East Asian countries is no protection against global economic forces.

Japan's growth rates have tumbled, and South Korea's are being revised sharply lower. Large current account deficits and heavy reliance on short-term foreign debt fan concerns about Mexico-type crises in Indonesia and especially Thailand. East Asia's labour costs are rising far faster than expected.

China's vaunted economic "soft landing" looks increasingly as if it has a hard floor, while growing Chinese trade surpluses with the United States add yet another nasty edge to the Pacific rim's most important, and already much troubled, relationship.

The most unexpected harbinger comes from the success that several of the old economies of the West have had in meeting the challenge of reforming their welfare systems. New Zealand is perhaps the most striking example of how economic recovery has followed the swallowing of unpleasant medicine. Its elections on Saturday will provide some indication how democracies cope with such a drastic cure.

Or consider Canada, recently derided as a "Third World country in the developed world." It has also taken swift and unpleasant steps to reduce debt and the welfare burden. Just agreeing to such changes was supposed to take a generation. But Canada had to act fast to preempt a looming threat that international bond markets would refuse to keep funding its deficits.

In European Union countries, once thought by some East Asians to be fatally afflicted with Euro-sclerosis, there are encouraging signs. Germany is starting to take its cure and turn the tide in favour of welfare reform. Britain, now in the top rank of growing European economies, can claim to have pioneered the principles of privatisation, labour market flexibility and welfare cuts that will be needed to make Europe more competitive.

Contrary to expectations, the key EU players are making progress towards meeting the economic conditions for creating a single European currency. Of course, the Union is still some way from a full-blown revival of economic power. Nor is Europe likely to lecture others about the virtues of "European values."

But Asians do have reason to wonder whether they are not seeing signs that they stay at the top of the economic growth tables may be shorter than expected. As they contemplate the lesson of contemporary Japan (the sun also sets), East Asians might be more willing to join Europeans in thinking through the prospects of the new millennium.

The writer is a senior fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies and director of Britain's Pacific Asia Programme. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

Heavy transit and mining traffic puts
road network under great pressure

Water should not be thought of as a cheap resource but as liquid gold, World Bank tells Jordanians

Following is the third of a four-part article summarising a World Bank booklet on the Jordanian economy. Today's article covers the water and transportation sectors. The second part was published on Thursday Oct. 24, 1996

AMMAN — "Of all the resource management challenges that Jordan must confront, none is more critical than water," the World Bank said in a new booklet about the Jordanian economy.

The World Bank added that renewable water supply per capita in Jordan is among the lowest in the world, only one half that of Israel or Syria, and one fifth that of Egypt.

"Over the course of the next few years increases in population and industrial growth will further intensify the demand for this scarce commodity. Consequently water should not be thought of as a cheap resource but as liquid gold," the booklet pointed out.

The World Bank examined the water situation in the country and gave the following assessment:

This view of water means every effort must be made to conserve and recycle it, and new ways to finance new water supplies need to be developed. The World Bank and the government are working closely together on these fronts. They plan to launch a series of projects over the next few years to reduce the system losses in Amman and other cities (where over half the incoming water is lost); to upgrade wastewater treatment so that agricultural and industrial users receive good quality recycled water; to bring new supplies of water to urban areas; and to raise the efficiency of irrigation.

Approximately three-quarters of Jordan's water supply is devoted to agriculture. Crop substitution away from water-demanding crops such as fruit, wheat, and barley would substantially lessen water use and create an economically more efficient agriculture sector.

The gradual implementation of the government's policy reforms should help reduce water waste by creating a more realistic incentive structure for farmers. Market-oriented reforms include the removal of price controls and subsidies for farm products, and the liberalisation of trade that will encourage expansion into export markets.

To assist with this transition, the World Bank approved an \$80 million agriculture sector adjustment loan to help offset some of the transition costs of reform. In addition, the World Bank has approved a \$6.6 million technical assistance loan that will help facilitate water management in the Jordan Valley, assist with groundwater control, and help strengthen agricultural support services.

Now in the planning stage is a project with International Finance Corporation (IFC) support for building up agricultural exports.

In the coming century emerging technologies will make water a renewable resource for those countries that make the necessary capital outlays. Revenues derived from water supply as well as general economic growth need to be reinvested to increase water availability and to steer clear of the dangers of a water crisis.

The World Bank and other donors are working with the government to stave off the potential for a future crisis by taking steps today to promote water conservation, development, and an equitable distribution of this scarce resource.

Another area examined by the World Bank was the transportation sector. The booklet said Jordan's location makes it a transportation crossroads.

The World Bank noted that transportation is a major source of income (11 per cent of gross domestic product), employment (6.5 per cent of all jobs) and foreign exchange (about \$380 million in 1995, mostly through trans-shipment services via the Port of Aqaba and overland routes).

Further insight in this sector was detailed in the following analysis:

The road, rail and air infrastructure is good, but it faces the dual challenges of expanding to meet the demands of the emerging regional market, and keeping existing infrastructure in good condition.

With its heavy transit and mining traffic, the road network is under great pressure, and domestic funding has not been adequate to meet both construction and maintenance requirements.

To help address the maintenance problem while upgrading the road infrastructure, the World Bank has provided a \$35 million loan to help finance an \$80 million transport project.

This project is rehabilitating and upgrading several major roads, including the main north-south highway that links the Port of Aqaba to the economic centres and transit corridors in the northern region.

This highway is a critical artery for foreign trade, and will need to carry much more traffic as the domestic and regional economies grow. The project is also improving construction standards to reduce future maintenance costs, and preparing plans for a user-based system of raising funds for road maintenance.

The government and the World Bank are planning a new project to implement many improvements developed under the current one.

As road rehabilitation and construction works progress, the government is planning to introduce regulatory reforms to improve competition and secure the financial health of the trucking industry.

Road maintenance will improve as road users begin contributing through a modest fuel surcharge to a fund dedicated to keeping roads in top condition. And the overstretched public transport system in the Greater Amman area, on which many low-income families depend, will be upgraded and a ring road begun to allow transit traffic to avoid the city centre.

Jordan's rail infrastructure and equipment are well-adapted to their main need, carrying rock phosphate to Aqaba for processing and export. The operational efficiency of the Aqaba Railway Corporation and its equipment maintenance need to be improved, however, and a new rail line to carry expanded output from the Shidiya Phosphate Mine is urgently needed.

The World Bank is helping the government to attract private financing as part of an agreement under discussion for private operation and maintenance, for this new line.

Looking further into the future, the government and the World Bank are working on possible cooperation in expanding and modernising Jordan's airports, serving Amman and Aqaba, and the Port of Aqaba, to deal with expanding tourist traffic and goods trade.

This is an area where the World Bank offers technical advice, linkage with other sources of official financing, and help in developing ways to bring in private participation, rather than direct financing, to ensure that the infrastructure is designed, financed and operated in the most efficient way possible.



Prime minister meets senior World Bank official

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Friday met Inder Sud (right), director of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the World Bank, and reviewed with him the Kingdom's programme for restructuring the national economy.

Discussions, which took place in the presence of Planning Minister Rima Khalaf, covered achievements made so far in the course of implementing the Kingdom's economic reform programme.

Expressing satisfaction with the progress achieved in this programme, Mr. Sud referred to the successful talks conducted by a Jordanian delegation with World Bank and International Monetary Fund officials in Washington earlier this month.

Mr. Kabariti also expressed satisfaction with the progress of this programme and reaffirmed Jordan's commitment to it. He also expressed hope that the World Bank will continue to support Jordan's endeavours to create a social security net to protect the limited income groups.

Mr. Sud who was accompanied by Abdullah Bouhabib, adviser to the vice-president, Adil Kanaan, chief, country operations division (Middle East) and senior country officer John McGregor left Amman Friday after a four-day visit.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.5229	0.8234	1.7615	113.34	1.3436	1520.60	1.7054	5.1420
DE Mark	0.6566	-	0.4091	0.8285	74.45	0.8823	997.64	1.1211	3.3746
GB Sterling	1.6040	1.6040	-	2.0254	181.82	2.1551	2438.43	2.7336	8.2457
CH Franc	0.7927	120.67	0.4938	-	69.82	1.0647	1203.39	135.27	4.0725
JP Yen	0.0088	1.3409	0.5488	1.1115	-	1.1938	11.42	150.43	4.5278
CA Dollar	0.7443	1.1404	0.4659	0.9399	1.18	-	1137.58	1.2734	3.6550
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9989	0.4088	0.0828	134.27	0.8818	-	11.21	3.3729
NL Guilder	0.5653	89.17	0.3546	73.84	66.38	0.7864	891.17	-	3.0078
FR Franc	0.1945	0.2961	0.1212	24.5404	22.05	0.2614	33.23	33.2200	-

Energy		
Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	24.85	24.95
W. Texas	24.45	24.45
Bony	24.85	24.85
Dubai	21.59	21.34
UL Gas	225.00	226.00

Mid-East Currencies						
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4081	0.16621	0.33651	30.2673	
AE Dirham	0.2724	0.41487	0.1698	0.34377	30.9205	
KW Dinar	3.3378	5.08388	2.08073	4.2123	378.931	
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.0404	1.65344	3.4784	301.114	
CY Pound	2.1487	3.2705	1.3388	2.7106	243.555	

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	382.5	383
Silver (oz's)	4.9	4.92
Platinum (oz's)	382.9	383.9
AL (3 Months)	1436	1437
CU (3 Months)	2014	2016
Zinc (3 Months)	1030	1033
Lead (3 Months)	737	739
NI (3 Months)	7220	7225

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)						
Period	1	3	6	9	12	Year
Currency	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.20	5.40	5.50	5.62	5.68	
GBP	5.61	5.73	5.82	5.97	6.14	
JPY	0.37	0.37	0.40	0.53	0.59	
DEM	3.03	3.11	3.13	3.12	3.18	
FRF	2.93	3.32	3.39	3.44	3.47	
CHF	1.43	1.53	1.50	1.68	1.68	
ITL	7.66	7.53	7.32	7.13	7.06	

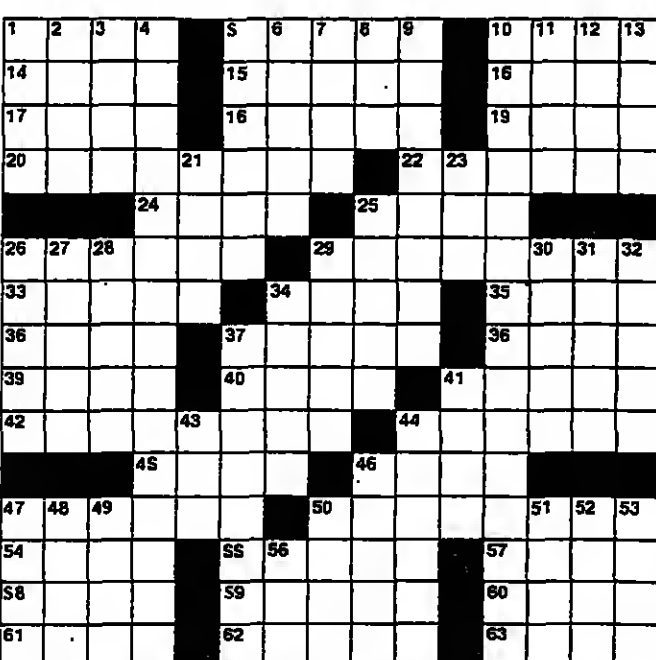
Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	124.83	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1435	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	325	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	165	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	22.33	Spot
Tea (kg/kg)	117	Spot
Barley (\$/ton)	2.3	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	470	Spot

JOD Cross Rates		
Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1294	1.135
DE Mark	0.465	0.4673
CH Franc	0.5645	0.5673
FR Franc	0.1375	0.1382
JP Yen	0.627	0.6301
NL Guilder	0.4145	0.4168
IT Lira	0.4624	0.4647

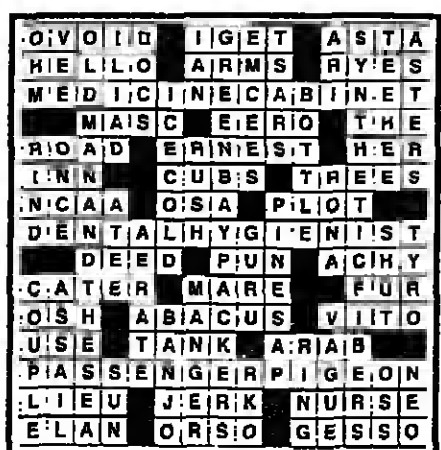
* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- Unadorned
 - Beg
 - Vaccine name
 - Nobelist Wieser
 - Kitchen appliance
 - Golf club
 - "All My Children," e.g.
 - Person
 - Yarn
 - Out of money
 - Clone
 - Byway
 - Eban of Israel
 - Somewhat
 - Respite
 - Resin
 - TV actress, Skye
 - Donette
 - Viewpoint
 - Parts of innings
 - "O'clock scholar"
 - Not one red —
 - Beginning
 - Jabbered
 - Horses at the trotters
 - Argument
 - Poi ingredient
 - Boxing weight
 - Arms maker
 - Bread spread
 - Pickling solution
 - Mrs. Ernie Kovacs
 - Mr. Shari
 - Tag
 - Bambi
 - "Kiss Me —"
 - Pitchers
 - Three feet



by Norma Steinberg



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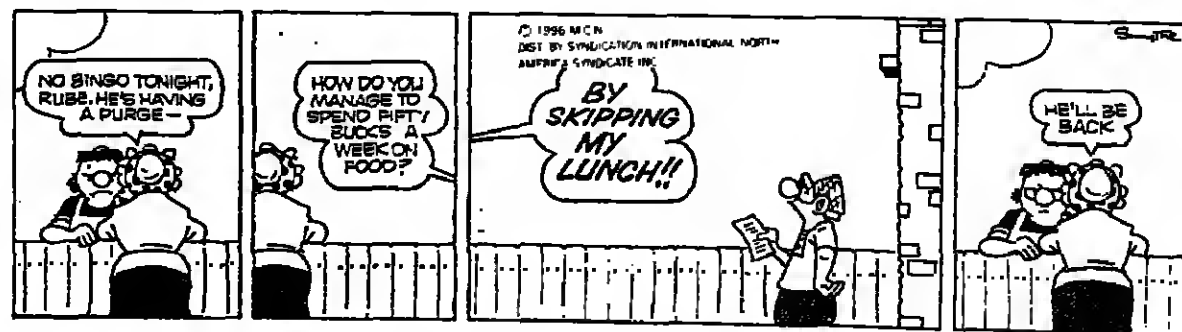
- DOWN
- "Porgy and —"
 - Thanks —
 - Perjurer
 - Shopping place
 - Compensate ahead of time
 - Washed
 - Author
 - Baginold
 - Go-between: abbr.
 - Debt evader
 - "Seinfeld" or "Friends"
 - Bedouin
 - Drop laxly
 - Patella's place
 - North or barber
 - Nigerian ruler
 - "— we all?"
 - Heathen
 - Author Loos
 - Metal fastener
 - Inspid
 - Domicile
 - Go in
 - Takes ten
 - Group of ships
 - Mix, as eggs
 - Rowboat
 - accessories
 - Govt. gp.
 - Committees
 - Piano worker
 - Hire
 - mater
 - Spiffy
 - Make taunting remarks
 - Think tank output
 - Row of seats
 - Group of cows
 - Unrefined

JORDAN TIMES
TEL:
684311 — 699634

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson,
Astrologer, Carroll
Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get worldly affairs organized well today, so that you can proceed with those career activities which are important. Be more concerned with personal things to bring greater happiness to your loved ones in the days ahead.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Talk over your new ventures today with those you have met recently and use the suggestions you are given. Get at your career activities enthusiastically, thereby you can accomplish a great deal in the days ahead.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Get your vital bills paid today with promptness and gain the goodwill of others. Get into new ventures with knowledgeable people and gain insight towards completion of any projects which have been put aside.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Some kind thought today for an outside fellow associate can bring excellent results with your career activities. Show your talents towards gaining abundance to big-wigs and you can achieve success in your efforts.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You can bring your talents for business before the public today and gain recognition from those in authority who are aware of your abilities. Avoid one later this evening who may be trying to fool you with good intentions.

VRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Be thoughtful of your mate today and he or she will be quite appreciative of your intentions. Later this evening be off with a fellow associate who has good ideas for improving career activities which are present.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Get your home fixed up today so it is more charming and comfortable for those who live under your roof. Use your talents later this evening gain popularity from those in authority who can see your potential.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Write little notes and letters today which can please your friends. Influential persons should be welcomed into your home so that they can see how prosperous you have become and success you wish to become in the days ahead.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Plan how to improve your property today and make it more valuable and beautiful. Tonight enjoy a hobby which you like very much and thereby you can relax from the pressures of career activities.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You rise today with a feeling of well-being and you can communicate nicely with others, make whatever effort you need to be successful. Be practical later this evening concerning career activities which are pressing.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Make a plan of action today which will help you to please close friends and relatives. Enjoy later tonight any recreation which you like and relax for the days ahead will be busy with business activities.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Give support to a good friend today who has an enterprise which is important. Get your fine talents working later this evening thereby you will gain recognition from those in authority who are appreciative.

Birthstone of October:
Opal — Tourmaline.

Upward trend expected to continue at AFM until end of year

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Share prices at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) edged up a little last week as tension subsided in the Palestinian territories and local companies showed better performance in the first three quarters of the year, broker said Friday.

They said the market appeared to have recovered from a losing streak over the past five weeks and they expected the upward trend to continue in the market until the end of the year.

"But any dramatic increase depends on concrete progress made in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations," commented a broker, who, like other AFM dealers, cannot be identified by name.

The weekly report of the AFM said weekly turnover was 2.8 million dinars, down from the previous week's 3.6 million dinars.

The report said 2.7 million shares changed hands under 2,516 deals concluded during the week, with daily average trading at

560,000 dinars compared with the previous week's 720,000 dinars.

The official AFM share price index based on 60 major companies closed at 148.66 points, up 1.91 points or 1.33 per cent, up from the week's opening 146.75 points.

Industrials accounted for 1.39 million dinars of the weekly volume, followed by commercial banks and financial institutions with 860,000 dinars, followed by services sector with 540,000 dinars and insurance stocks with 53,000 dinars.

Sectoral indices showed commercial banks and financial institutions rose by 2.14 per cent, industrials by 0.52 per cent, services sector dropped by 0.33 per cent and insurance stocks 1.32 per cent.

Stocks of 82 companies were involved in the week's trading, with 22 of them closing with gains, 44 slipping and 16 remaining unchanged.

Pearl Consulting, a private sector firm which maintains its own market indicators, said its general share price index had

gained 1.18 per cent. Banks and financial institutions gained 1.31 per cent, insurance firms dipped by 0.7 per cent, services remained unchanged and industrials dipped by 0.52 per cent.

Further sectoral splits-ups showed that commercial banks gained 1.34 per cent, investment banks dipped by 0.6 per cent, specialised banks lost 0.43 per cent and Islamic banks slipped by 1.74 per cent.

Among services sector firms, energy companies gained 0.33 per cent, tourism-related companies and hotels dipped by 0.62 per cent, transport firms gained 0.39 per cent, and investment firms and real estate companies gained 1.29 per cent.

Among industrials, mining companies gained 0.71 per cent, chemical and petroleum companies dipped by 0.93 per cent, construction firms by 0.49 per cent, supply and foodstuffs companies by 1.68 per cent, pharmaceuticals by 0.43 per cent, engineering companies by 0.36 per cent and textile firms by 0.73 per cent.

Insurance premium income may exceed JD80m in '96

By Christina Schlegl
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Insurance companies, the Kingdom's fourth biggest sector in terms of market capitalisation, and value traded, are estimated to have a pre-tax income of over JD 80 million in 1996, Raouf Abu Jaber, Chairman of the United Insurance Company Ltd. told the Jordan Times.

Regarding the insurance sector's contribution to the country's economy, Dr. Abu Jaber estimated it at JD 104 million in 1994 (no up-to-date figures were available here), considering only funds which include cash deposits with banks and to the order of the Ministry of Industry and Trade (the latter is a guarantee placed at the disposal of the ministry to ensure claim settlement for the clients).

The figure also includes bonds and various types of shares as well as loans given to clients and real estate purposes. Sami Fakhoury, assistant director of the insurance department at the Ministry of Industry and Trade, could not verify such figures for the current year yet, as "this is still too early to do so."

He said the department would need around one more month to issue correct statistics.

Of the 24 insurance companies operating in Jordan, only one is a foreign company, the American Life Insurance Company. According to estimations

by the Ministry of Industry and Trade more than 1,000 people are employed within the sector.

seventeen companies out of the 24, are providing life insurance, which is the second biggest field within insurances available.

Moreover, there are 12 insurance broker, 100 insurance agents and 17 surveyors located in Jordan. Mr. Fakhoury told the Jordan Times.

This year's estimated figure of premium income would result in a 14 per cent increase over last year's figure of JD 74 million and would come to a 23 per cent increase over 1994's figure of around JD 66 million.

The total capital of insurance companies in 1995 was JD 42 million, according to the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

In terms of capital, the Kingdom's biggest insurance company is the Jordanian-German Insurance Company which has a capital of about JD 5 million. In terms of premium, the Jordanian Insurance Company with an estimated income of JD 9 million is considered as the "tycoon," according to Mr. Fakhoury.

The biggest share among insurances available in 1995 was car insurance with a premium income of around JD 32 million, followed by fire and marine insurance with an equal share of JD 20 million, Mr. Fakhoury stated.

Claim settlements in the same year, he added, amounted to JD 38 mil-

lion, whereas car claims had the biggest share with JD 22 million, followed by marine and fire claims amounting to JD 3 million.

Ranking the Kingdom's biggest sectors, Ismail Haddaj from the Jordan Financial Market Research Centre stated that in terms of market capitalisation — that means the number of subscribed shares times the relevant closing prices of the stock market — the banking sector has the biggest share with a capital of JD1.6 billion (status: Sept. 1996), followed by the industrial sector with JD 1.2 billion, services with JD 340 million and the insurance sector with JD 70 million.

In terms of value-traded, Mr. Haddaj said, the ranking is the same. The figures for 1995 are for banks JD 149 million, industry JD 123 million, services JD 82 million and for the insurance sector JD 7 million.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET														
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI														
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179														
ORDINARY MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (10/10/1996 - 23/10/1996)														
WEEKLY REPORT														
DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS		COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE TURNOVER	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
HIGH LOW							JD						PRICE	
244.000	241.500	ARAB BANK	12.4	1.41	48	1380	439615	242.00	249.00	242.50	249.00	0.00	244.75	5
3.000	2.950	BANK OF JORDAN	10.8	0.00	4	4747	14166	2.99	2.98	2.95	2.98	0.01	2.97	3
1.140	2.020	MID-EAST INV. BK.	70.9	0.00	76	72460	79180	1.10	1.12	1.00	1.08	0.02	1.10	5
1.270	3.200	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	6.0	5.29	5	5325	11609	2.20	2.18	2.10	2.10	0.02	2.10	7
4.900	4.720	THE HOUSING BK.	12.8	2.88	22	33708	159470	4.76	4.80	4.61	4.60	0.04	4.77	3
2.710	2.550	JOR. FINANCIAL BANK	38.8	0.00	10	442	1145	2.95	2.40	2.51	2.50	0.05	2.50	2
1.940	1.910	JOR. SECUR. BANK	5.4	7.78	43	63985	58415	1.92	1.92	1.90	1.90	0.00	1.92	6
3.550	3.500	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	19.3	0.00	6	10103	36253	3.55	3.60	3.50	3.60	0.00	3.50	5
3.810	3.660	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	18.0	0.00	13	3174	11832	3.76	3.76	3.70	3.76	0.00	3.72	3
1.410	1.410	UNION RE. INV. BK.	109.8	0.00	2	3760	6728	1.41	1.52	1.43	1.43	0.00	1.43	1
3.420	3.250	JOR. INV. FIN. BANK	17.6	0.00	8	1105	3882	2.25	2.25	1.25	1.25	0.00	1.24	3
1.200	1.200	RETAIL-AL-RAL (BILITIA)	3.2	7.86	7	2260	4122	1.01	1.06	1.91	1.91	0.00	1.92	2
4.610	4.610	ARAB BANKING CO.	23.2	0.00	11	3305	14861	4.61	4.60	4.45	4.60	0.00	4.57	2
1.400	1.710	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	-	0.00	24	16150	22019	1.37	1.37	1.33	1.33	0.00	1.33	5
GRAND TOTAL														
					280	222474	862486	INDEX NUMBER	148.66	CHANGE		1.33		
BANKS SECTOR														
2.170	2.140	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.6	10.05	21	20660	41813	2.14	2.10	1.99	1.99	0.00	2.07	3
2.470	2.470	TARNODK INSUR.	-	0.00	8	6000	10646	2.47	2.56	2.01	2.13	0.00	2.13	4
2.100	2.100	HOUS. LAND TRUST	6.2	0.00	1	200	430	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	0.00	2.10	2
2.000	1.950	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.7	2.80	1	260	513	2.00	2.05	2.05	2.05	0.00	2.05	1
INSURANCE SECTOR														
					21	26100	53291	INDEX NUMBER	110.98	CHANGE		1.32		
1.420	1.580	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	33.1	7.50	57	61642	82820	1.61	1.61	1.60	1.60	0.01	1.61	5
1.620	1.400	JOR. ELECTRICITY	9.5	6.90	1	600	725	1.43	1.45	1.45	1.45	0.00	1.45	1
4.820	4.800	ARAB TEL. HOTELS	10.4	2.76	6	1846	8702	4.82	4.70	4.65	4.66	0.00	4.66	2
2.450	2.460	SHIPPING LINES	10.6	8.00	5	16600	26772	2.46	2.46	2.45	2.50	0.00	2.45	2
1.240	1.170	NATL. PORTFOLIO	-	0.00	100	108230	100561	1.19	1.24	1.16	1.24	0.00	1.16	2
1.680	1.630	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	33.9	0.00	19	12150	8122	1.68	1.68	1.66	1.66	0.02	1.67	3
7.950	7.400	ALARA I	9.0	6.58	2	700	6320	7.40	7.60	7.40	7.40	0.00	7.40	2
1.790	1.630	MID. EAST HOTELS	72.8	0.00	5	9466	16039	1.63	1.70	1.64	1.69	0.00	1.69	2
9.800	3.420	ARAB LIFE. INV. TRUST	12.9	5.48	26	17260	10880	3.50	3.52	3.50	3.52	0.00	3.50	2
1.170	1.170	KARMA EDUCATION	-	0.00	11	3627	4132	1.17	1.15	1.13	1.15	0.00	1.15	2
1.840	1.730	UNIFIED CO.	9.2	5.71	26	4960	8652	1.76	1.75	1.74	1.75	0.01	1.75	2
1.920	1.920	UNION LAND DEV.	-	0.00	18	6852	6214	1.90	1.93	1.91	1.91	0.00	1.91	2
SERVICES SECTOR														
					354	761112	438738	INDEX NUMBER	111.74	CHANGE		1.32		
2.220	2.220	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	38.9	3.03	66	19284	62972	3.29	3.30	3.22	3.20	0.00	3.20	2
2.290	3.120	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	33.4	0.00	4	3043	6433	3.12	3.10	3.10	3.10	0.00	3.10	2
5.660	5.410	ARAB POTASH CO.	36.8	3.60	20	4830	26559	5.45	5.55	5.45	5.55	0.00	5.45	2
9.250	9.250	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.2	8.73	43	2460	22484	9.26	9.25	9.08	9.10	0.00	9.10	4
1.420	1.280	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	56.0	0.00	10	5060	6469	1.36	1.20	1.26	1.26	0.00	1.26	3
3.200	2.170	INDUSTRIAL COMM. AG.	28.4	0.00	7	1110	3442	2.20	2.21	2.20	2.20	0.00	2.20	1
7.100	4.970	JOR. MORTGAGE BANK	8.9	3.59	5	1584	11005	7.00	6.96	6.95	6.96	0.00	6.96	2
2.600	2.460	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	16.8	5.96	66	16076	64683	2.46	2.44	2.38	2.42	0.00	2.42	4
6.160	6.050	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	7.6	4.12	7	1918	11612	6.16	6.07	6.05	6.07	0.00	6.07	4
1.770	1.750	JOR. PIPE MANUFACT.	9.4	7.06	2	1060	1814	1.75	1.76	1.70	1.70	0.00	1.70	2
2.260	3.150	JOR. PAPER CARBON.	16.7	3.08	1	100	125	3.26	3.25	3.25	3.26	0.00	3.26	2
9.800	3.460	ARAB CHEM. ENTERPRISE	12.9	5.48	26	17260	10880	3.46	3.52	3.50	3.52	0.00	3.50	2
2.610	3.460	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.7	8.67	16	11700	40960	3.49	3.62	3.49	3.50	0.00	3.50	4
1.910	1.910	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	-	0.00	483	70711	149143	1.91	1.91	1.91	1.91	0.00	1.91	5
2.750	2.750	GENERAL INVESTMENT	6.6	5.46	4	4470	12360	2.75	2.89	2.75	2.75	0.00	2.75	2
1.240	1.130	ARAB PAPER CONV. TRD.	8.3	8.63	3	228	274	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	0.00	1.20	2
3.420	3.300	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	-	0.00	14	17600	22535	3.30	3.30	3.27	3.28	0.00	3.28	2
1.660	1.660	NATIONAL IND.	9.2	9.68	21	28795	17955	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	0.00	1.62	5
1.170	3.100	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	-	0.00	20	8621	9371	1.10	1.09	1.06	1.07	0.00	1.07	2
1.910	1.890	JOR. ROCKETRY IND.	154.4	0.00	3	750	667	1.80	1.89	1.88	1.88	0.00	1.89	2
2.870	2.870	UNIV. CHEM. ENTERPRISE	89.3	0.00	3	450	1182	2.70	2.85	2.82	2.82	0.00	2.82	2
2.660	2.550	BAYE. CARB. WTR. MFG.	14.7	0.00	1	100	242	2.40	2.42	2.42	2.42	0.00	2.42	1
1.840	1.830	JOR. SULPHUR-CHEN	-	0.00	1	250	204	1.83	1.82	1.82	1.82	0.00	1.82	1
1.400	3.320	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	24.3	0.00	9	1610	4493	3.32	3.30	3.30	3.30	0.00	3.30	2
1.450	1.340	UNIV. MACH. IND.	4.6	11.16	47	15750	24017	1.34	1.34	1.31	1.31	0.00	1.31	2
1.420	1.300	JOR. IND. REFINERIES	12.7	0.00	10	190450	150318	1.37	1.42	1.37	1.41	0.00	1.41	2
1.940	1.920	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	24.7	0.00	121	74060	46774	1.92	1.92	1.91	1.91	0.00	1.91	2
1.850	1.800	EL -RAY REPLY WEAR	315.1	0.00	6	2200	3646	1.80	1.80	1.79	1.79	0.00	1.79	2
1.160	1.120	EMEL. TOBACCO	26.6	0.00	47	22542	25111	1.12	1.12	1.11	1.12	0.00	1.12	2
1.130	1.050	UNION CH. & VEG.	26.1	0.00	3	250	166	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	0.00	1.06	2
GRAND TOTAL														
					1146	1064519	1074673	INDEX NUMBER	110.73	CHANGE		0.52		
GRAND TOTAL														
					1811	1566205	243258	INDEX NUMBER	148.66	CHANGE		1.30		
AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET														
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI														
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179														
PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (19/10/1996 - 23/10/1996)														
WEEKLY REPORT														
DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS		COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE TURNOVER	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
HIGH LOW							JD						PRICE	
550	510	CENTRAL OIL STORAGE	20.1	0.00	9	5960	2943	561	550	49	50	0.01	495	1
630	590	JOR. TRADE TRAC	16.5	0.00	11	13750	8070	599	59	58	58	0.00	587	2
530	490	NATL. COMM. CENTERS	0.00	0.00	57	41900	21948	51	56	51	51	0.00	526	1
550	510	ARAB INV. RESOURCES	0.00	0.00	72	111400	55594	51	52	60	50	0.01	503	1
740	730	UNION INV. SEC	70.0	0.00	30	30777	7393	74	75	74	74	0.00	740	5
490	490	ARAB FOOD & MND.	0.00	0.00	3	350	369	63	64	61	63	0.00	635	1
610	480	ARAB INTL. INV. TRUST	0.00	0.00	16	17150	8882	48	47	47	47	0.01	471	1
480	420	JOR. SECUR. BANK-UNION	0.00	0.00	9	4500	2545	42	40	39	39	0.00	392	3
3400	3400	ARAB STEEL PIPES	8.8	6.94	3	1650	5470	360	340	342	340	0.00	3434	1
1450	1380	NATL. CHEMOLINE	0.00	0.00	28	23979	32636	138	138	135	136	0.02	1361	3
720	590	NATL. TEXTILE	0.00	0.00	82	41900	21948	62	65	63	64	0.01	635	1
700	470	TRV. REELS	0.00	0.00	7	5250	3333	47	46	43	44	0.01	435	2
800	770	JORDAN STEEL	0.00	0.00	31	25075	19244	78	78	76	76	0.02	771	1
540	480	ARAB ELECT. IND.	139.6	0.00	10	4024	1934	49	48	48	48	0.01	480	3
1460	1410	UNION TOBACCO 751	0.00	0.00	11	116	133	141	142	142	142	0.00	142	1
650	440	NATL. PHARM. 651	0.00	0.00	13	7360	1987	61	63	62	62	0.01	620	4
820	460	INDS. ENG.	29.0	0.00	73	66600	30600	47	48	46	47	0.00	464	3
450	780	INDS. CHEMICAL	0.00	0.00	12	3200	2562	82	81	80	80	0.00	801	6
490	390	1.250000 MARF.	0.00	0.00	2	460	371	38	38	38	38	0.00	38	2
1790	460	NATL. EAST COMPLEX	8.1	0.00	132	136200	93407	46	72	66	69	0.04	691	6
570	520	NATL. WTR. ENG. MARCO	0.00	0.00	78	105415	54433	52	54	51	53	0.01	516	5
GRAND TOTAL														
					705	697749	414262							

IOC evaluation commission in Athens for 2004 bid

ATHENS (R) — Athens is planning to convince the International Olympic Committee (IOC) over the next four days it has responded to past criticism and should be selected to host the 2004 Summer Games.

"This time around we are better off... We've learned from our mistakes and we want to win the Olympics on merit," said Yanna Angelopoulou, head of the bidding committee, as the IOC's evaluation commission began an on-site inspection on Thursday.

Greece fought hard to stage the centennial Olympics this year, saying it had a special right as the country where the ancient Games originated and where they were revived in 1896.

But the IOC voted down the bid because of Greece's poor infrastructure and a lack of confidence that Athens could meet the demands of the big sports festival.

"This is a totally new bid with a totally new attitude," insisted Angelopoulou. "Eighty percent of the sports facilities are already in place and we have the money for the rest. We are proud of our Olympic heritage but we don't depend on it to win the Games."

Greece has an 80,000-seat Olympic stadium and a surrounding sports complex which includes a 20,000-seat indoor basketball court, two swimming pools, a velodrome and three main tennis courts.

It plans to spend \$332 million on the remainder of the sports facilities which will be ready by the year 2002. The \$290 million Olympic village will be financed by private investors.

Seven major infrastructure projects worth \$6.8 billion, are already in progress including a new Athens metro, a new airport, highways, bridges and investments in telecommunications. These works are mostly funded by the European Union.

Angelopoulou said all 11 cities bidding for the 2004 Games were strong candidates but other bidding committee officials said they saw Athens, Rome and Stockholm as favourites.

She said Athens will be tested next August when it hosts the World Athletics Championships.

"The World Championships will be a major test and we must make sure everything goes well," she said.

A recent nationwide poll by the bidding committee showed that 96.4 percent of Greeks want the Olympics and thousands have already signed up as volunteers.

During its four-day visit, the evaluation commission will hold meetings with Prime Minister Costas Simitis, President Costis Stephanopoulos and other senior officials.

هكذا حنة لياصل



New York Yankee players run onto the field after they defeated the Atlanta Braves 1-0 in game five of the World Series. The victory gave the Yankees a 3 games to 2 lead in the series (Reuters photo)

Yankees set to dethrone Braves as they take 3-2 series lead

ATLANTA (AFP) — An unprecedented reversal after losing the first two games of the World Series has put the New York Yankees on the verge of dethroning reigning champion Atlanta.

The Yankees completed a three-game sweep here by beating the Braves 1-0 Thursday, taking a 3-2 edge in the best-of-seven baseball championship.

"When you're up 3-2, you should win it," Yankee manager Joe Torre said.

New York had the greatest road record in baseball playoff history. The Yankees won all eight post-season games away from Yankee Stadium, where game six is Saturday and game seven, if needed, would be played Sunday.

"After losing the first two, it didn't look good. But we play well from behind," Yankee game six pitcher Jimmy Key said. "I was counting on getting another chance to show what I can do. I love a challenge."

No team in the 93-year history of the series had lost two home games then taken three on the road until the Yankees fell 12-1 and 4-0 in New York and won here 5-2, 8-6 and 1-0.

"This is redemption for U.S.," said New York's David Cone, who would pitch Sunday. "It's an incredible twist. The first games were an embarrassment. We didn't even give our fans a chance to get into it. Now it will be a frenzy up there. We know it. We welcome it."

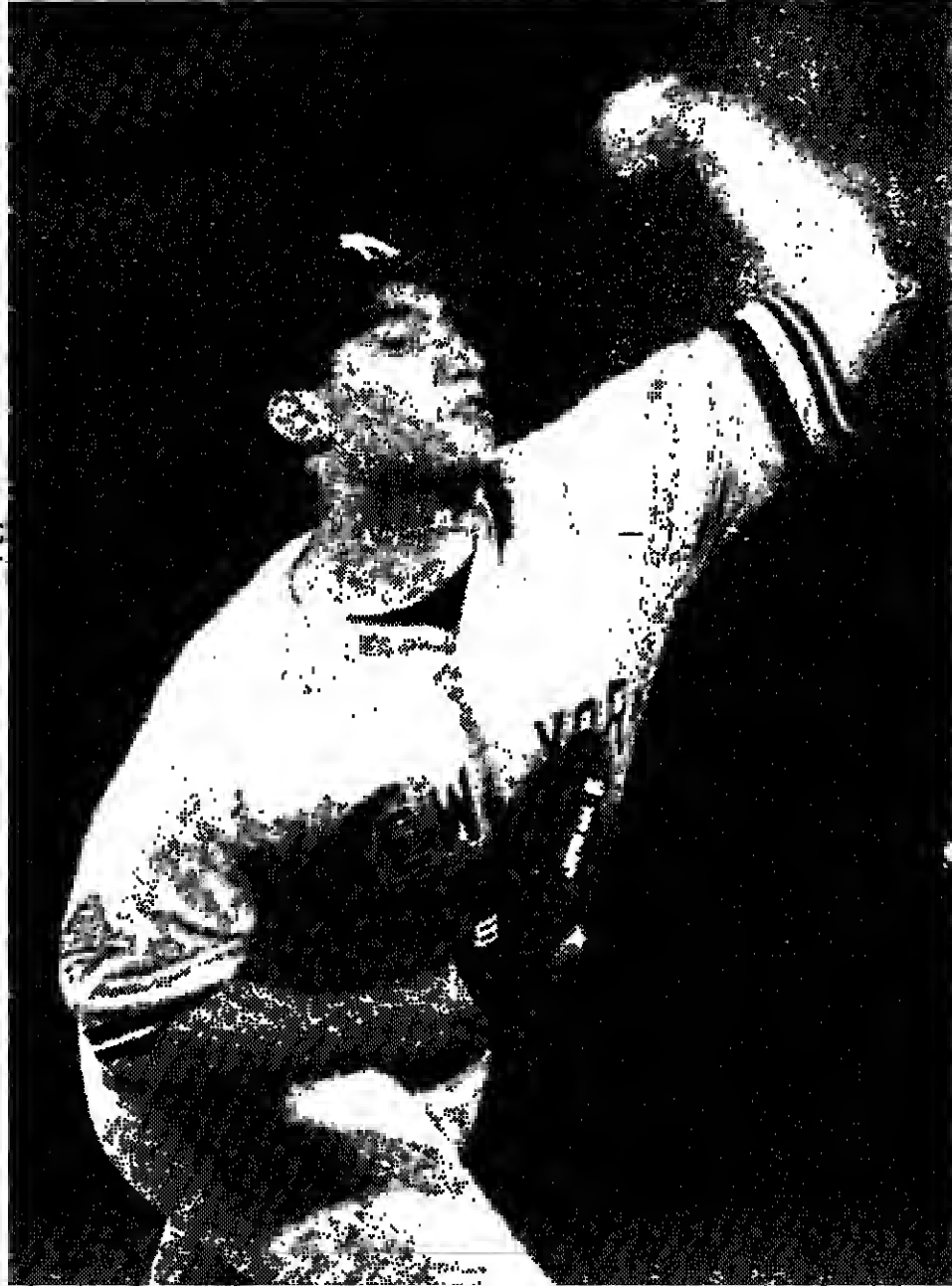
The Yankees, in their first World Series for 15 years, have not won a title since 1978. They hope to win their 23rd crown in their 34th series by toppling the Braves.

"It's gut-check time," Atlanta pitcher John Smoltz said. "I have all the confidence in the world we will come through. We're down but not out."

Four-time National League "pitcher of the year" Gregg Maddux goes against Key on Saturday in a rematch of game two rivals. Tom Glavine would throw in a seventh game.

"Maddux and Glavine will be on top of their games in New York," Atlanta manager Bobby Cox said. "Pressure is always on the team that is leading because you're itching to get it."

The Braves have been on the brink before. They



New York Yankees pitcher Andy Pettitte pitches in the first inning against the Atlanta Braves during game five of the 1996 World Series at Fulton County Stadium. Cecil Fielder knocked in the only run of the game as the New York Yankees beat the Atlanta Braves 1-0 to head home with a three games to two lead in the World Series (Reuters photo)

trailing St. Louis 3-1 in the National League finals last week before capturing the final three games of that series.

"It's the same position as last week and we came through," Maddux said. "I'm looking forward to it. Every game is the biggest game I have ever pitched. It helps having been there, knowing the little things."

The Yankees have faced down adversity as well. They have won a record six comeback victories in this year's playoffs, including the second greatest rally in series history, reversing a 6-0 deficit to win game four.

"It almost felt like we lost the World Series because we blew that damn thing,"

said Cox, whose club lost another heart-breaker in game five when Marquis Grissom made an error to let the lone scoring runner reach base.

Grissom made only one error in the 162-game regular season but has made three in the playoffs.

"It's up to us older guys to keep the young guys positive, help them forget the last couple of days," Glavine said. "We have had our backs to the wall before and responded well. We have to relax."

The Braves were relaxed Tuesday with a 2-0 edge in the series.

"After being up 2-0, you would have sworn shouldn't have even been playing the

rest of the series," Smoltz said.

New York's Cecil Fielder, the leader for series most valuable player honors, cautions his teammates about similar feelings.

"Our club is on a high but we have to stay in control," Fielder said. "We can't let emotion overcome us. It took a long time to get this opportunity. You don't want it to pass you by. You can't take anything for granted."

Fielder is also cautious about Maddux, who overpowered New York earlier.

"Each at bat was different. Seeing him will help me against him next time. You have to be aggressive. But you can't be overly aggressive."

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Filipescu goes to Galatasaray

BUCHAREST (R) — Romanian midfielder Iulian Filipescu's transfer from Steaua Bucharest to Galatasaray Istanbul of Turkey has been finalised. The deal was completed after Galatasaray increased their original offer of \$800,000 to \$900,000. Filipescu joins two other members of Romania's national team, captain Gheorghe Hagi and Adrian Ilie, at Galatasaray.

Sampras calls for less Davis Cup

STUTTGART (AFP) — Americans Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi called Thursday for less Davis Cup fixtures — one tournament every two years — as a means of attracting the world's best players back to the historic event. World No. 1 Sampras, playing here in the ATP indoor event, said: "The Davis Cup is being more and more undervalued. It should be played every two years, like the Ryder's Cup for golfers. There is too much tennis and barely any time for the best players. For his part, Olympic champion Agassi said: "I can only play every two years because the Davis Cup is so demanding and takes up too much energy. Sampras, Agassi, Michael Chang and Jim Courier all declined to play for U.S. this year. The defending title holders were knocked out of the competition in the quarter-finals by the Czech Republic in Prague.

Bayern want Klinsmann till '98

BONN (AFP) — Bayern Munich manager Karlheinz Rummenigge says he wants to keep striker and victorious German captain Juergen Klinsmann in the side at least until 1998. In an interview with Kicker magazine, Rummenigge said he hopes the star player "will stay, at the very least, until 1998." Klinsmann, who has been heavily criticized in the German press for his early season performances, was rumoured to be considering a move to Everton, Arsenal, Chelsea or back to Manchester United, by invoking his one year escape clause next year. The German captain's contract officially ends in June 1998.

Samaranch ponders IOC bid

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — International Olympic committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch will decide early next year if he will step down or not as head of the world's most powerful sports body. The 76-year-old, on a visit to the Danish capital, said on Friday he would make an announcement in March. "My decision will depend on my health, the feelings of the national Olympic committee members and my family," said Samaranch who took control of the IOC in 1980. Samaranch's mandate runs out in September next year but there is no clear replacement for him.

Men in black see yellow

BUCHAREST (AFP) — Romania's football first-division risks running out of players this season after referees decided to go on a yellow card binge according to the Romanian press. Ten weeks into the season, the referees have booked over 500 players in the first division — an average of 5.4 a match — complained the newspaper libera on Friday. In a recent match in the capital the referee set a new record when in the final 10 minutes he managed to book 12 players.

Keegan plugs defence holes

LONDON (AFP) — Newcastle United manager Kevin Keegan has called in former Liverpool defender Mark Lawrenson to help tighten defensive gaps in his English Premiership pacesetters. Keegan has made the move despite his team's overwhelming victory over champions Manchester United last weekend because he is unhappy with a back-line which has conceded 15 goals in 14 league and cup matches so far this season. It was the defence which let Newcastle down last year when they were pipped at the post for the title by Manchester United after giving away 37 goals in 38 games. "I feel like a kid again," said Lawrenson. "There's only a handful of jobs I would take back in football and obviously Newcastle is one of them." Lawrenson, who played alongside Alan Hansen during Bob Paisley's reign at Anfield, won 38 caps with the Republic of Ireland. Keegan's move coincides with the loss of his 15 million pounds England striker Alan Shearer. Shearer will be out of action for two months as he recovers from an operation on a groin injury.

Dahlin returns to Germany

BONN (R) — Roma's Swedish striker Martin Dahlin looks set to return to his former club Borussia Moenchengladbach until the end of the season. Germany's Sid sports news agency reported Thursday. "There's good reason to believe Dahlin will be coming back to Moenchengladbach," Borussia treasurer Guenter Classen said. Italy's ANSA news agency reported that Roma, who signed Dahlin at the end of last season, had opened negotiations with Moenchengladbach. Dahlin scored 50 goals in 106 Bundesliga games for the Germans but has failed to secure a place in the Roma first team. Meanwhile, his former side have struggled in the Bundesliga. Sid said the clubs were discussing a deal which would bring Dahlin to Moenchengladbach on loan until the end of the season with an option of a permanent move after that.

Dumitrescu rumours denied

LONDON (AFP) — Manager Harry Redknapp slammed reports that Romanian star Ilie Dumitrescu could be kicked out of the Premiership club because of a poor attitude. "That is so far from the truth it is scandalous. I think he is a top-class person and he certainly has not got a bad attitude," Redknapp fumed. "He is a good pro and works his socks off. You don't play as many internationals as he has without being a class player." Dumitrescu has barely played for the Hammers this season and was left out of the 14 involved in the 4-1 league cup win over Nottingham Forest on Wednesday. But Redknapp explained: "I need him to get fit and over his hamstring injury completely." Dumitrescu will be restored to the bench for Saturday's Premiership clash with Blackburn.

Borg threatened with bankruptcy

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Creditors of Swedish tennis legend Bjorn Borg have filed a suit to declare him personally bankrupt in a bid to reclaim the 12 million kronor (\$1.92 million dollars) he owes them.

The 40-year old five-times Wimbledon champion, who now plays on the veteran's tour and who was forced to declare his clothing company bankrupt in 1989, has long claimed that he is penniless after being the victim of a series of bad business deals. He declares no official income in Sweden.

"He claims he has no money. I say that is false. This is one way to investigate the matter," claimed Bertil Soedermark, the lawyer representing the 11 creditors Borg has owed since 1989.

If a court decides to declare Borg personally bankrupt, a trustee will be assigned to examine his assets and compile an inventory of his estate. If his assets do not cover his debts, Borg would have to reveal all of his assets under oath, including anything outside Sweden.

Borg, who has already sworn in court that he has no assets, has lent his name to a successful line of underwear, footwear, spectacles and perfume and he has been accused in some press reports here of channeling away cash to the Dutch antilles, out of the reach of Swedish authorities.

Borg is known to have earned at least two million kronor (\$303,000) in official prize money on the veteran's tour last year, and another 250,000 kronor (\$38,000) so far this year.

And the tennis icon, who draws big crowds to his matches, may also have been paid unofficial fees for making appearances.

Borg, meanwhile, has been clearing up his image in Sweden over the past twelve months.

For his 40th birthday a few weeks ago, a "Bjorn Borg day" was held in his honour in his home-town of Soedertalje and following tennis and hockey matches against Swedish sports stars, Borg hosted a banquet at 1,495 kronor (\$227) a ticket.

As with all other provable income, Borg gave the money to charity.

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CONCORD

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UP CLOSE & PERSONAL
Shows: 3:30, 8:30
THE SCARLET LETTER
Shows: 12:30, 6:15, 10:30

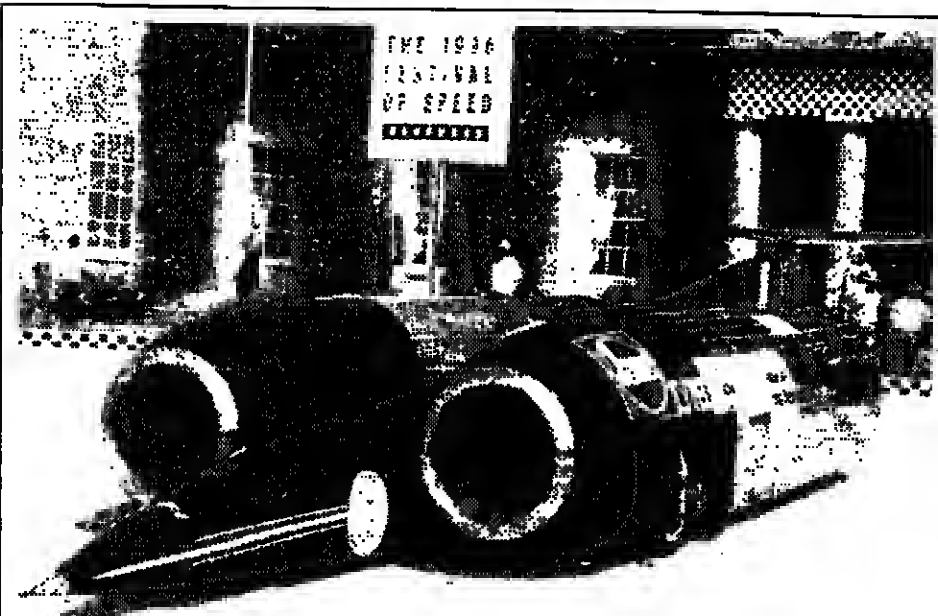
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Supersonic car lands in Al Jafr today

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The British team bringing the world's fastest car to Jordan arrive in Jordan today where they will be attempting to break the world's land speed record in the upcoming two weeks.

An Antonov plane will land Thrust SSC in Al Jafr at 3:30 p.m. local time to start preparations for the historic feat.

The actual attempt to set a new record will be held in the coming ten days after a series of trial runs.

The jet-engine powered Thrust SSC will seek to rewrite Richard Noble's own record which was set in 1983 and stands at 1019.44 kph. British Air Force officer Andy Green will be aiming for the record books when he attempts to reach the speed of 1368 kph before an American team tries to do the same at Black Rock desert in Nevada.

The Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ), the Royal Jordanian Air Force and the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre, and Royal Jordanian have all cooperated to make the event a success.

RACJ will be using the attempt on behalf of the international automobile association FIA. The event will also be

closely monitored by speed enthusiasts world-wide via the Internet, FIA, the Mach Club and others.

Thrust accelerates 48 kph in less than a second with twin Rolls Royce Spey jet engines which propel the 10 tonne 16 metre-long vehicle.

The track at Al Jafr is a 16 kilometre-long stretch of very hard, very flat surface which is compacted mud and is expected to offer much better grip than sand.

Castrol have sponsored the research and development work for Thrust and will be providing lubricants for the Rolls Royce engines as well as for their aluminium alloy wheels which will rotate at 8500 rpm and have a massive heat build up.

Specially designed lubricants will be used to maintain the efficiency and peak performance of each of the 11,340 kilogramme thrust of the twin jet engines.

The Thrust SSC's construction is very similar to a supersonic prototype fighter. The carbon and aluminium body panels will produce an extremely stiff structure which will preserve its aerodynamic shape while experiencing the high stress of supersonic flight just 250 millimetres off the ground.

Newcastle face up to life without Shearer

LONDON (AFP) — Premiership leaders Newcastle travel to Leicester on Saturday, anxious that the absence of the inspirational Alan Shearer will not prompt a repeat of the slump that cost them the title two years ago.

Manager Kevin Keegan will be only too aware of the parallel with the 1994/95 season when the loss of former Newcastle goal machine Andy Cole during the autumn with a shin injury led to a dramatic reverse in their fortunes.

The decline from run-away leaders to title race also-rans took just over two months — the length of time England captain Shearer is expected to be sidelined after undergoing surgery to a troublesome groin injury Thursday.

Shearer, with eight club goals already this term, has enjoyed a flourishing partnership with Les Ferdinand since his world record 15 million pound (\$24 million) transfer from Blackburn over the summer.

But Keegan is confident his squad has the strength in depth — as well as in character — to overcome the setback of his sudden loss.

"It is obviously a blow for us in the championship race, but we have to believe we've got a squad deep enough and good enough to compensate," said Keegan whose side destroyed champions Manchester United 5-0 last Sunday.

United manager Alex Ferguson meanwhile is poised to wield the axe after the club's worst defeat for 12 years last weekend.

They travel to Graham Souths' revitalised Southampton, who have scored seven goals and conceded none in back-to-back league wins over Middlesbrough and Sunderland.

A one minute's silence will be observed at all Premiership matches this weekend in memory of Matthew Harding, the charismatic multi-millionaire vice-chairman of Chelsea, who was killed in a helicopter crash Tuesday night.

Chelsea defender Terry Phelan said the players would be doing their best to secure a victory in Saturday's home clash with Tottenham as a tribute to Harding.

Cigar the undisputed superstar of Breeders' Cup field

TORONTO (AFP) — The first Breeders' Cup outside the United States has attracted a host of stellar entries from around the world, but none are expected to outshine the remarkable Cigar.

The 1995 'horse of the year' and Breeders' Cup Classic champion, who saw his run of consecutive victories halted at 16 in August, drew the seventh post and was installed as the early 4-5 favourite for the one and a quarter mile \$4 million classic, one of seven races on the \$11 million programme at Woodbine racetrack Saturday.

The full classic field of 14 includes Taiki Blizzard, the first horse from Japan entered in a Breeders' Cup event.

Dare and Go, who ended Cigar's winning streak in the Pacific Classic at Del Mar, California, is a 6-1 choice in the classic coupled with Articus.

Jockey Jerry Bailey, who is seeking his fifth classic win in six years aboard Cigar, who could be making the final start of his career at the same track where Secretariat bowed out of racing in 1973.

A dozen European entries include the favorites for both turf races. The Sheikh Mohammed-Godolphin entry of Singpiel, Swain, Shantou and Wall Street are 9-5 for the \$2 million, 1 1/2-mile turf, while the Godolphin entry of Mark of Esteem and Charnwood Forest are 8-5 for the \$1 million mile.

European horses make up half of the 14 entries in the turf.

Singspiel won the Canadian international over this course and distance in his last start.



Sam-Son Farm's Chief Bearhart exercises in an pre-dawn workout at Woodbine race track in Toronto. The Canadian-owned Chief Bearhart will compete in the Breeders' Cup turf race on October 26 (Reuters photo)

The horse least-likely to challenge them has to be New Mexico-based Ricks Natural Star, trained by owner William Livingston, who goes to the post for the turf as the first claimer in Breeders' Cup history.

Canada will be well-represented with eight Toronto-based runners. The home team's best chance could be Langfuhr, trained by Mike Keogh and a 5-1 chance in the \$1 million, six-furlong sprint.

The juvenile will feature 11 youngsters going one and 1/16 miles, with Champagne Stakes winner Ordway favoured at 2-1, breaking from the sixth post with jockey John Velazquez. The strong second choice at 5-2 is Overbrook Farms' Boston Harbor, starting from the second post under Bailey.

The always competitive mile is fully subscribed with Queen Elizabeth II Stakes winner Mark of Esteem the horse to beat in the field of 14. The North American defense is headed by Da Hoss, a 5-1 choice narrowly beaten in the Kelso handicap in his last start.

The distaff traditionally attracts the smallest Breeders' Cup field, and just seven go to the post over one and 1/8 miles this year, headed by early 9-5 favourite different. Different and Criollito in the sprint are the only horses supplemented to the Breeders' Cup this year.

A well-matched field of 13 sprinters are entered in the \$1 million sprint. Honour and Glory, who has

first or second in all of his six-furlong mile was the early 3-1 favourite. Close behind was the speedy filly Capelle at 4-1 and Lantier at 5-1.

Swain Song and Sharp Cat, who finished 1-2 in the Little Stakes, were made top choices in the \$1 million Breeders' Cup juveniles, which has a field of 10.

A crowd of 40,000 is expected. The first race, the juvenile fillies, is scheduled at 17:50 GMT.

For their time, 31,000 programmes will be printed in Chinese and distributed at television simulcast outlets in Canada and New York, and the event will be broadcast in six countries.

Sampras to face Agassi in quarters

STUTTGART (AFP) — Compatriots Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi will come face to face in the quarter-finals, after the two Americans took straight-set wins Thursday lasting less than an hour each.

World No. 1 Sampras defeated Spain's clay-court specialist Felix Mantilla 6-1, 6-4 while ninth seeded Agassi ousted compatriot Richey Reneberg 6-4, 6-2.

The high-profile pair join German Australian Open winner Boris Becker in the quarter-finals. The sixth seed battled to a 6-4, 7-5 victory over 12th-seeded Swede Thomas Enqvist earlier in the day.

Sampras leads the career series between the two men 10-8, and has won their last encounters — finals at San Jose in February and the U.S. Open last year.

Their last six meetings have been in tournament finals dating to the Australian Open of 1995.

But Agassi is keen to reverse his recent losing trend. "It's the ultimate challenge in tennis at the moment to play Pete," he said.

"We're meeting a little earlier than usual, but I expect it to be difficult."

"We played a quarterfinal in Paris two years ago. It

can only help me to get out and play matches after being off for six weeks."

Sampras was underplaying the contest, one more step on his way towards trying to claim the end-of-season world No. 1 standing for a fourth straight year.

"Andre returns my serve well and puts pressure on me. It's a matter tomorrow of who comes out sharper. "It's different when you have him across the net. But we just play the match and leave the rivalry on the court."

In other matches, fifth seed Goran Ivanisevic produced 13 aces to defeat No. 11 Todd Martin 6-2, 6-4. The Croatian, who won four titles over six weeks in the spring, will take on unseeded Dutch surprise packet Jan Siemerink.

Siemerink, the winner this week over Russian world no. 4 Yevgeny Kafelnikov in the second round, defeated Italian Renzo Furlan 6-4, 6-4.

Wimbledon title-holder Richard Krajicek went out 6-4, 6-1 to Chile's Marcelo Rios, one of six contenders chasing three remaining qualifying places for the ATP Tour championships from November 19-24 in Hannover, Germany.

Swede Magnus Gustafsson eliminated Australian Mark Woodforde 6-7 (3/7), 6-2, 7-6 (7/4) to bring on a match against Becker, who leads their series 3-1.

For his part, Boris Becker jockeyed into position for a place in next month's eight-man ATP Tour finals when he defeated Swede Thomas Enqvist 6-4, 7-5 to reach the quarter-finals.

Second-seeded Michael Chang nudged his career record against former world number-one and fellow-American Jim Courier to 11 wins against 10 defeats by scoring a 7-5, 6-2 victory in the day's final match.

Chang, one of the five men already qualified for the ATP Championship, faces Rios for a place in the semi-finals.

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French Fed Cup women look to Noah

PARIS (AFP) — France's top women players want Davis Cup supreme Yannick Noah to take over as captain of the women's Fed Cup team as well.

Mary Pierce and Julie Halard-Decugis are spearheading a campaign to replace current captain Francoise Durr by the 36-year-old former French Open champion, whose inspired leadership led France to their first Davis Cup triumph in nearly 60 years in 1991 and who has put the men back in the fold of the men's team event again this year.

The two players, who have recently been nursing serious injuries, have taken their idea to both Durr and to the French federation's chief coach Jean-Claude

Massias. And they claim to have the verbal backing of France's other Fed Cup players Nathalie Tauziat and Sandrine Testud after contacting them at tournaments abroad.

Clearly the French players want some of the Noah magic to rub off and help them win the trophy that has eluded them ever since the women's team competition was launched in 1963.

"Mary and Julie came to me and said they thought we needed a change of captain," admitted Durr, who has been in charge of the French squad which has reached the world group semifinals for the last four years.

"I have nothing against that. Four years can be a long time and change may

not be a bad thing. "But I was surprised they wanted Noah as captain. He has never appeared to be interested in women's tennis and I hope I shall be able to discuss it with him at the French indoor open at Bercy next week."

Pierce, the 1995 Australian Open champion who has a shoulder injury, admitted: "Julie and I did see Yannick about it."

"But it's just an idea — and we'd like not to comment too much on it until we've had a chance to talk it out thoroughly with Nathalie (Tauziat) and Sandrine (Testud) — and that won't be until at least December."

Massias said: "After the girls approached me I did

have a word with Yannick about it and he said he was definitely interested. But there is still a lot to discuss."

"Francoise (Durr) has done a marvellous job as captain and is very close to the players. She led us to the semifinals again this year and with just little bit of luck we could well have beaten Spain and found ourselves in the final."

"But we shall have to look at dates and programmes and see if it is feasible for one person to captain both teams. But time is on our side. We haven't got to make a rush decision and there is plenty of time to discuss the situation with all concerned."

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Under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan the Embassy of Italy and the Ministry of Culture present the 11th Italian Film Week in Jordan 22 - 29 October 1996 at the Main Theatre of the Royal Cultural Centre

PROGRAMME

1) Sosilene Pereira (Pereira Holds)	22/10	1:00 p.m.
Director: Roberto Faenza	23/10	5:00 p.m.
2) Regalo di Natale (Christmas Present)	23/10	8:00 p.m.
Director: Pupi Avati	24/10	5:00 p.m.
3) Romanzo di un giovane povero (The Story of a Poor Young Man)	24/10	8:00 p.m.
Director: Ettore Scola	25/10	5:00 p.m.
4) Una storia semplice (A Simple Story)	25/10	8:00 p.m.
Director: Ermidio Greco	27/10	5:00 p.m.
5) Per grazia ricevuta (For Favours Received)	27/10	8:00 p.m.
Director: Nino Manfredi	28/10	5:00 p.m.
6) Nemic d'infanzia (Childhood Enemies)	28/10	8:00 p.m.
	29/10	5:00 p.m.

All films are Italian with subtitle in English. Entrance ticket is JD 1 for adults and 500 fils for students. All proceeds will go to the Centre for Special Education of the Young Muslim Women's Association.

GOREN BRIDGE

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CUT THEM OFF AT THE PASS

North-South vulnerable North deal.			
NORTH		EAST	
♠ A 9 5 3		♠ J 10 8 7	
♥ Q 4		♥ 6	
♦ A Q 3 2		♦ 10 7 6	
♣ K Q 7		♣ A J 8 8 2	
WEST		SOUTH	
♠ K Q		♠ A 4 2	
♥ K 9 7 5		♥ A J 10 8 3 2	
♦ 10 5 4		♦ K 8	
♣ 10 9		♣ 6 4 3	

The bidding: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
Pass Pass 4: Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♠
Trump promotion is a potent weapon in the defensive armoury. Often, declarer has to submit helplessly. Once in a while, however, a counter is available.
The hand highlights the efficacy of transfer bids over an opening trump. Unless East is inspired to lead a low club against four hearts, the game will make with ease. That

was not the case when South became declarer.
West hit the bull's-eye with the opening lead of the ten of clubs. Dummy's queen was played and East did well to signal encouragement with the eight rather than take the ace. To counter the looming club ruff, declarer cashed three high diamonds, disposing of a club.
The queen of hearts was run to the queen. As long as declarer guesses the spade position, rising with the ace if West shifts to a low spade, the contract cannot be defeated.

مكتبة ابن رشد

Truce in Afghanistan looks highly unlikely

KABUL (Agencies) — Taliban warplanes flew sorties over the battlefield north of Kabul on Friday and artillery pounded a village held by forces of the ousted government.

Efforts toward a ceasefire looked less and less likely to meet success.

In a valley ringed by snow-capped mountains, north of the capital, Taliban troops dug in against government forces.

While the Taliban thud of exploding artillery warned of a possible new fighting front.

Two dozen pickup trucks crowded with Taliban fighters, armed with assault rifles and rocket launchers, roared towards Maidan Shahr, about 30 kilometres southwest of Kabul.

In the distance the thud of exploding artillery could be heard.

It was not immediately clear who was involved in the fighting southwest of the city or whether they posed a serious threat.

The two Soviet-era warplanes, earlier seen in the fighting, were loaded with 100-kilogramme bombs.

At the same time, artillery of the village of Kalakan here at least 14 civilians were killed by a Taliban bomber on Thursday.

Commanders led to former government military chief Ahmad Shah Massoud have been operating out of Kalakan, 25 kilometres north of Kabul, as their forces tried to break through Taliban lines over the past few days.

Taliban fighters near the

front line said they tried again on Thursday night, but were repulsed. There was no independent confirmation of the report.

Meanwhile, in Kabul, Taliban soldiers swinging whips and clubs pushed men into the city's main mosque on Friday.

Those who resisted were beaten with sticks and whips.

Within a half-hour, the Pesh-Keshi mosque was packed with about 2,000 people.

When the mosque was full, the dozen bearded and armed Taliban religious enforcers laid their assault rifles before them on the marble entrance way and knelt in prayer.

Inside, the sheikh declared that "God will punish those who do not accept the Taliban."

Four rifle-toting bodyguards stood between him and the congregation. The black-bearded cleric, wearing a white turban, condemned military leaders opposed to the Taliban as criminals.

Since taking control of Kabul last month, the Taliban religious army has imposed its own strict version of Islam.

They have banned women from the work force, closed girls' schools, forced men to pray in the mosque, grow beards and wear the traditional turban or skullcap.

The Taliban also vow to implement its harsh brand of Islamic justice, cutting off the hands and feet of thieves, hanging murderers and stoning to death adulterers and flogging most other offenders.

The cleric at Friday's service said communist

President Najibullah, who was tortured, shot and left hanging from a traffic post for two days by invading Taliban troops was killed because "he was a mass murderer."

He said there was no need for a trial because "every-one knew he was guilty."

Earlier on Friday, Taliban troops were seen digging in along what is referred to as the new road to Bagram military airport, some 50 kilometres north of Kabul.

A second older road also leads from the capital to the strategic military base.

Both roads have been the scene of heavy fighting between the Taliban and rival troops.

There were conflicting reports from the frontline about who was in control of a strategic military airport at Bagram.

Mullah Habibullah, a local Taliban commander, said the Taliban had pushed soldiers loyal to deposed Masoud out of Bagram, but reporters in the area said the military base had not changed hands.

They also saw sporadic fighting on Thursday, but they said it was mostly around Hussein Kot, about 30 kilometres south of Bagram towards Kabul.

As Mr. Habibullah told reporters Friday that "there is no one in the base (at Bagram) now," the sound of exploding artillery shells could be heard.

Mr. Habibullah refused to let reporters beyond the Taliban check post well south of Bagram, which made it impossible to corroborate his claim.

Divided Israel remembers Rabin

TEL AVIV (R) — Israelis marked the anniversary of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Thursday as divided politically as they were on the eve of the murder.

"I want to ask your forgiveness, grandfather. A year has passed and nothing has changed. It appears nothing has changed," Rabin's grandson Yonatan Ben-Artzi said in a speech at the official gravesite ceremony in West Jerusalem.

In Tel Aviv, thousands of people streamed to the public square where Rabin was shot dead by a right-wing Jew at a peace rally a year ago. Schoolchildren marked the killing in a moment of silence.

The murder took place on Nov. 4, 1995, but Israelis marked the anniversary according to the Jewish calendar.

Family and Israeli leaders across the political spectrum gathered at the gravesite for a state memorial. Friends and family wept.

At the cemetery on West Jerusalem's Mount Herzl, the widow Leah Rabin spoke on a phone moments before the ceremony began.

Israel television said it was a call from U.S. President Bill Clinton.

But sparring between left and right continued unabated over the peace process Rabin embodied and the fate of Israeli-occupied land.

A procession of religious and right-wing cabinet members — who took office in June on a platform opposed to Rabin's policies — laid wreaths on the grave but only family mem-

bers spoke at the ceremony. It was in sharp contrast to Rabin's funeral last year which attracted scores of world figures, including Arab leaders drawn to the man who paid with his life for his peace policies.

"The murder did not succeed in creating a common experience for all of the public. On the contrary, each side became more fortified in its position," wrote the newspaper Haaretz in an editorial.

Israel television said on Wednesday Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and dozens of legislators had received death threats in recent weeks, including opposition leader Shimon Peres, who shared the Nobel Prize with Rabin for their 1993 peace deal with the Palestinians.

Mr. Netanyahu defeated Peres in elections last May by fewer than 30,000 votes.

Rabin's landmark peace deals with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat made the Israeli leader and former war hero a traitor in the eyes of some right-wing Jews who view the West Bank as land promised to the Jews by God.

The idea that a Jew would murder the prime minister of the Jewish state shocked Israelis but a year later left and right could not even agree on how to commemorate the assassination.

Israel's high court ruled on Thursday against a petition to make the anniversary a national memorial day after right-wing legislators overruled the initiative in parliament that was put forward by a member of Rabin's Labour Party.

Some Israelis felt the initiative was an attempt by the left to gain political mileage from the assassination.

Leah Rabin, who accused Mr. Netanyahu and other right-wing leaders a year ago of helping create the atmosphere of political violence that precipitated the murder, said the left in Israel was always the victim and the right the aggressor.



Three Israeli girls mourn over the flower-covered grave of assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Friday (Reuters photo)

No one ever fired from left to right. If shots were fired, they were fired from right to left and this is no coincidence," she said earlier in the day.

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Carlos wants ban of book about him

PARIS (AFP) — Carlos the Jackal has asked for a book about his alleged exploits to be banned, saying it threatens his right to a fair trial, lawyer said Friday.

The book Carlos — the secret networks of international terrorism — "threatens Carlos' right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty," said the lawyer.

Carlos is in Paris jail since being arrested in 1994. Carlos is also demanding 350,000 francs (\$70,000) damages over the affair.

Venezuelan Carlos — real name Jhon Ramon Sanchez — was arrested in the Sudanese capital Khartoum on Aug. 14, 1994.

He was the world's most wanted man, and is charged with six blasts in France from 1974-1983.

His lawyer Frederic Ponsard said the book by French journalist Bernard Viot, which was published Thursday, includes material which will be crucial in court.

"The book relates actions exactly as they are described in various legal papers which are currently ongoing, in extraordinary detail," he said, arguing that they "incriminate directly Ramirez Sanchez, making him it to be responsible for acts which he has denied."

The lawyer is taking legal action to have the book withdrawn from shelves, or to have an addendum added stating that Carlos denies the accusations "which seek to build a Carlos myth."

Hizbollah kills two Israeli soldiers in South Lebanon

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (Agencies) — Two Israeli soldiers were killed and four wounded in South Lebanon when pro-Iranian Hizbollah guerrillas set off a bomb in their patrol overnight, pro-Israeli militia sources said on Friday.

The blast targeted the foot patrol in the Jarmaq-Aishiyeh area in the central sector of Israel's South Lebanon occupation zone at about midnight, the sources with the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia said.

In retaliation, Israeli and SLA gunners opened up with artillery fire onto hills surrounding the area of the attack.

The casualties brought the number of Israeli soldiers killed in Lebanon this year to 23. It was the first fatal raid against Israeli forces in the zone since Sept. 19 when two soldiers were killed and two were wounded in a Hizbollah ambush.

In Beirut, Hizbollah claimed responsibility for the attack, saying its fighters set off a bomb in an Israeli patrol in the Jarmaq-Aishiyeh area shortly before midnight.

The group claimed the Israeli patrol was "attempting an infiltration

towards the free areas" of Lebanon, implying the patrol was trying to lay an ambush for possible infiltration by Hizbollah guerrillas.

An Israeli army spokeswoman said: "A bomb was set off against an Israeli force on patrol in the eastern sector of the South Lebanon security zone. Two soldiers were killed and four were wounded, three severely. Hizbollah took responsibility for the incident."

Hizbollah leads a guerrilla war against some 1,000 Israeli forces and the 3,000-strong SLA in the zone in a bid to oust them from South Lebanon.

Israeli security forces have been on high alert this week fearing attacks around the first anniversary of the assassination of Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shabaqi, which members of the group say Israeli secret agents carried out.

Roadside bombs are a common weapon of Hizbollah guerrillas in their war to drive the forces of Israel and its SLA militia allies from the occupied zone. It was established in 1985 to guard against guerrilla raids and rocket attacks across the border into Israel.

Iraq oil deal could be delayed for months

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Despite the dire effects of sanctions on the Iraqi people, implementation of a U.N. oil-for-food plan continues to be delayed, with some envoys saying they do not expect the deal to go ahead for months.

At issue is an arrangement that would allow Iraq to sell \$2 billion of oil over six months, on a renewable basis, to buy food, medicine and other necessities to help offset the impact on ordinary Iraqis of sanctions imposed after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Iraq, in a 14-page memorandum to Secretary-General Boutros Ghali on Wednesday, said the sanctions threatened its society with a "horrendous disaster that may lead to its collapse," and accused Washington of attempting genocide.

Nevertheless, Iraq says the plan cannot be implemented until the United States approves an oil pricing formula that all other Security Council members have endorsed. Iraq has also put restrictions on U.N. staff that would help carry out the plan that U.N. officials find unacceptable.

U.N. Under-Secretary-General Chinmaya Gharekhan told reporters on Wednesday that "Iraq cannot move ahead with implementation" of the plan unless the Security Council's Sanctions Committee agrees on oil pricing formulas, which serve as the basis for contracts determining the cost of Iraq's petroleum.

The last formula was presented to the council's Sanctions Committee in August. It was approved by U.S., Norwegian and Russian oil experts appointed by the United Nations but blocked by the United States.

An agreed-on pricing plan would avoid the necessity of individual contracts going through the committee and allow the oil experts or overseers to approve them.

The envoys said Iraqi diplomats, in private conversations, had stressed their fear that Washington wanted the ability to stop the deal at any point by forcing each contract to go through the full committee, where any one member can oppose it.

The committee, headed by German Ambassador Tono Eitel, consists of all Security Council members.

At the same time, U.S. officials believe that some Iraqi authorities, opposed to the deal from the start, are looking for reasons to continue postponing it.

Arrangements to launch the plan were close to completion when Iraqi President Saddam Hussein sent troops into the largely Kurdish-inhabited north of the country at the end of August to back one side in an inter-Kurdish conflict.

Since then Iraq has told the United Nations it would decide what local staff members would work with the United Nations and restrict the movement of U.N. personnel in the north.

Tension persists in Bosnian spots

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Fifty Muslim homes in Serb-held Bosnia have been demolished in a fresh bombing campaign targeting abandoned property, a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) spokesman said Friday.

The homes, damaged and abandoned during the war, were reduced to rubble by rigging up anti-tank mines which were detonated in the early hours of Thursday.

Major Simon Haselock, spokesman for the NATO-led peace implementation force (IFOR), said.

In what Maj. Haselock said "appeared to be a tit-for-tat" move, 30 uninhabited Serb homes were torched Thursday near to Sanski Most, an area controlled by the mainly Muslim authorities in northwest Bosnia.

Tension over the return of Muslims to their former homes in Serb controlled areas has flared in several spots in recent months.

In what appears to be a coordinated campaign to preempt such returns, IFOR patrols have recorded a series of explosions in Serb areas earmarked for possible Muslim returns.

Maj. Haselock condemned the blasts, the largest single attack yet recorded. "Using mines to blow up shells of houses that people might fix up and move into is clearly

designed to keep fear alive and intimidate displaced people who might have wished to return," he said.

The U.N. refugee agency, UNHCR, also expressed concern over the destruction which occurred four kilometres southwest of Prijedor, a Serb held town in northern Bosnia.

"We are very worried about this incident. It's clearly not a good sign for returns," UNHCR spokeswoman Ariane Quantier said.

She added that the agency had been organising "assessment visits" for potential returnees to one of the villages targeted on Thursday. "This is a clear provocation to do this in this village," she said.

Maj. Haselock said IFOR did not know who carried out the blasts, or where they got the mines from.

However, he said the commander of NATO ground forces in Bosnia, Lieutenant General Michael Walker, was to visit the regional IFOR command Friday to discuss the issue.

Signs of further deterioration of Muslim-Croat relations in southern Bosnia were also reported Friday.

Ms. Quantier said that IFOR troops had to evacuate a group of 35 Muslims visiting their former homes south of Mostar after they were harassed by a mob of Croats.

Both Palestinians and settlers say they fear massacres in Hebron

HEBRON (AFP) — In the countdown towards an accord on an Israeli army pull-out, Hebron's Palestinians fear a backlash of violence by Jewish settlers opposed to the handover of the volatile city to Arabs.

In his home city a few dozen metres away from Jewish settlements in the heart of Hebron's Old City, Abu Samir Sbarabai told AFP he "expects the worst" from his neighbours.

"The Jews have told us they will make massacres of Arabs" in the case of a redeployment, he said. "They will never accept a withdrawal. It is impossible for us to live together."

But he added a warning: "They must know that if they refuse to live peacefully with us, an entire army would not be able to protect them."

Palestinian and Israeli negotiators say they are close to an accord to implement the Hebron pullout after three weeks of wrangling over security guarantees.

Increased for the 400 Jews living amid the city's 120,000 Palestinians.

As talks inch forward Jewish protests in Hebron have mounted against the army redeployment, as settlers face for the first time the prospect of Palestinian control of the city and, they say,

of Palestinian guns pointed at them.

"We think this is terrible, it's unbelievable. This is dangerous for the Jews," Ronen Cohen, an employee in the Jewish settlement, said. "The Palestinians have said they will use their guns against Jews if anything happens. So why are we being stupid and giving them guns?"

"We are not an army, but every settler has a gun to protect himself. If a Jew is in danger he will protect himself," Mr. Cohen said.

Under the 1995 Oslo self-rule accord, Israeli soldiers were to withdraw last March from 80 per cent of the city, where Palestinian police

would then take care of security.

The Israeli army would maintain a force to protect Jewish settlers, but Palestinians would gain municipal control of the entire city.

Israeli demands for changes in the pull-out have focused on buffer zones around the settlements, the right of "hot pursuit" in the Palestinian zone and limitations on Palestinian building near the settlement to ward off possible sniper attacks on Jews.

Now after a series of incidents last week in Hebron, even Israeli security officials have raised the spectre of

violence by right-wing Jews against the pullout.

"They have the guns, not us. It is us who need protection," said Aziz Amer, who has been appointed by Palestine President Yasser Arafat to become Hebron's governor after the handover.

Mr. Amer said settlers "have been acting over the past two weeks to raise tensions in the city. They are afraid, they want to do anything they can to prevent a redeployment."

"We have been seeing increased harassment of Palestinians by the settlers, who throw stones at our houses and even attack our children hoping to provoke

an Arab response which will bring in the soldiers," Mr. Amer said.

Palestinians said the settlers distributed leaflets earlier in the week with explicit threats of a "massacre of the Arabs."

Settlers attempted on Wednesday to seize two Palestinian shops near the settlement which have been closed for several months by Israeli authorities, but they were repelled by soldiers.

On Tuesday, a right-wing Jew from Jerusalem buried a cup of hot tea in the face of Labour Deputy Yael Dayan as she met Palestinians in the city. She afterwards reported

receiving death threats over the phone.

MR. Netanyahu and his Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, as well as opposition Labour leader Shimon Peres and left-wing Deputy Yossi Sarid, are under threat of attacks linked to the Hebron issue, Israeli radio said.

Earlier in the week 120 rabbis signed a petition describing an Israeli pullout from Hebron as "treason," a move that reminded many Israelis of protests against Labour Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin just before his assassination a year ago by a Jewish radical opposed to his peace policies.



Miss Canada charged with assault

ST. JOHN'S, Newfoundland (R) — The reigning Miss Canada, chosen for beauty and brains, has been charged with using her brawn on a woman in a bar room brawl.

Danielle House will appear in court on assault charges for allegedly punching a woman in a Newfoundland University bar last week.

Ms. House, age 20, was charged by police with assault causing bodily harm after a 20-year-old woman complained. The woman, whose identity has not been released, suffered facial injuries and a chipped tooth during the attack.

House, a Newfoundland native, won the Miss Canada title earlier this year and was scheduled to attend the Miss World International pageant in Jamaica on Nov. 15.

Pageant officials said they had no intention of stripping Ms. House of her crown and do expect her to compete in the international competition.

Primary colours author Joe Klein gets new job

NEW YORK (R) — Psssst. Don't tell anyone, but anonymous has got a new job. Joe Klein, the political columnist who was unmasked as "Anonymous," the author of the best-selling novel "Primary Colours," will leave Newsweek magazine and join the New Yorker in December to write that magazine's Letter From Washington.

The New Yorker said Thursday that Mr. Klein will replace Michael Kelly who is leaving to become editor of the New Republic.

Astronaut Lucid says life now back to normal

HOUSTON (R) — Astronaut Shannon Lucid said the effects of her record-breaking stay in space were all but gone and she was savouring some aspects of daily life while settling back into chores such as cleaning and cooking.

A month after her Sept. 26 return from 188 days aboard the Russian space station Mir, Lucid said she had new appreciation for such mundane things as being able to run out to buy a new book or pick up fresh fruit at the grocery store.

"There were a few times (in space) when it really hit you that you were isolated," she told a news conference. Now, she said, "I'm living just like I have always lived. I come to work during the day ... then I'm going home and cooking supper and trying to get the house back in shape."

Astrologer released from prison in Venezuela

CARACAS (R) — An astrologer detained for predicting the demise of Venezuelan President Rafael Caldera was released and said his forecast had not been politically motivated.

"It seems that among the taboo subjects is the health or mortality of the president," Jose Bernardo Gomez said after his release.

Interior Minister Jose Guillermo Andueza said Wednesday the secret police were investigating the "political implications" of the astrologer's prediction.

"It's a purely astrological prediction: He (Caldera) has Pluto ascending, Uranus on top of the sun, Mars reversing over his birth moon and an eclipse over the planet Quiron," Mr. Gomez said after spending two days in prison.